SOME MUSICIANS OF FORMER DAYS

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SOME MUSICIANS OF FORMER DAYS

BY

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SOME MUSICIANS OF FORMER DAYS

INTRODUCTION

OF THE PLACE OF MUSIC IN GENERAL HISTORY

MUSIC is only just beginning to take the place due to it in general history. It seems a strange thing that concepts of the evolution of man's soul should have been formed, while one of the strongest expressions of that soul has been ignored. But we know what difficulty the other arts have had in obtaining recognition in general history, even when they were more favoured and easier of approach by the French mind. Is it so long ago that this did not apply to the history of literature, and science, and philosophy, and, indeed, the whole of human thought ? Yet the political life of a nation is only a superficial part of its being ; and in order to learn its inner life—the source of its actions—we must penetrate to its very soul by way of its literature, its philosophy, and its art, where the ideas, the passions, and the dreams of its people are reflected.

We know that history may find resources in literature; and we know the kind of help, for example, that Corneille's poetry and Descartes' philosophy may bring to the understanding of the Treaty of Westphalia; or, again, what a dead letter the Revolution of '89 might be if we were not acquainted with the thought of the Encyclopaedists and eighteenth-century *salons*.

Nor do we forget the valuable information that the plastic arts give us about different epochs, for in them we behold an age's very countenance—its type, its gestures, its dress, its fashions, indeed its whole daily life. What a storehouse for history! One thing hangs to another: political revolutions have their counterpart in artistic revolutions; the life of a nation is an organism, where all is bound together—economic phenomena and artistic phenomena alike. In the resemblances and differences of Gothic monuments a Viollet-le-Duc could trace the great highways of commerce in the twelfth century. The study of some detail of architecture —a belfry, for instance—would show the progress of Royalty in France—the thought of the Ile-de-France imposing a peculiar construction upon provincial schools, from the time of Philip Augustus onwards. But the great service that art renders history is to bring it close to the soul of an epoch, and so let it touch the springs of emotion. On the surface, literature and philosophy may seem to give us more definite information, by reducing the characteristics of an age to precise formulas. On the other hand, this artificial simplification may

leave us with inelastic and impoverished ideas. Art is modelled on life; and it has an almost greater value than literature, because its domain is infinitely more extended. We have six centuries of art in France; and yet we are often content to judge the French spirit by four centuries of literature. Further, our mediaeval art, for example, can show us the life of the provinces, about which our classical literature has hardly anything to say. Few countries are composed of elements more disparate than ours. Our races, traditions, and social life are varied, and show evidence of the influence of Italians, Spanish, Germans, Swiss, English, Flemish, and the inhabitants of other countries. A strong political unity has dissolved these antagonistic elements, and established an average and an equilibrium in the civilizations that clashed about us. But if such a unity is apparent in our literature, the multiple nuances of our personality have become very blurred. Art gives us a much richer image of French genius. It is not like a grisaille; but like a cathedral window where all the colours of earth and sky blend. It is not a simple picture; but like those rose-windows which are the product of the purely French art of the Ile-de-France and Champagne. And I say to myself: Here is a people whose characteristics are said to be reason and not imagination, common-sense and not fancy, drawing and not colouring; and yet this is the people who created those mystical east-windows!

And so it is that acquaintance with the arts

enlarges and gives life to the image one has formed of a people from their literature alone.

. . . . . .

Now by turning to music we may extend this idea still further.

Music perplexes those who have no feeling for it; it seems to them an incomprehensible art, beyond reasoning, and having no connection with reality. What help can history possibly draw from that which is outside ordinary matter and, therefore, outside history?

Well, first of all it is not true that music has so abstract a character; for she has an undoubted relationship with literature, with the theatre, and with the life of an epoch. Thus no one can fail to see that a history of Opera will throw light on the ways and manners of society. Indeed, every form of music is allied with some form of society, and makes it easier to understand; and also, in many cases, the history of music is closely connected with that of other arts.[1]

[1] M. Pierre Aubry has shown that mediaeval music has passed through the same stages as other arts. It was at first a romantic art, "where secular music was hardly separated from liturgic song, and followed heavily in the train of Gregorian melodies; and where the notation of the neumes was doubtful and incomplete." Then came Gothic art, when the musicians, like the architects of the Ile-de-France, reigned over all Europe. Next, "the measured music of the trouvères softened and defined the melodic outline, which had up till then been wavering and undecided. At the same time, while the Gregorian melodies did not go beyond the *ambitus* (the compass) of the modes, the *prosa* of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries reached the extreme limits of the human voice, and soared as if never to fall, like the lines of Gothic buildings." Then at the beginning of the

It constantly happens that the arts influence one another, that they intermingle, or that, as a result of their natural evolution, they overflow their boundaries and invade the domains of neighbouring arts. Now it is music that would become painting, now painting that would be music. "Good painting is music, a melody," said Michelangelo, at a time when painting was giving precedence to music, when Italian music was extricating itself, so to speak, from the very decadence of other arts. The doors between the arts are not closely shut, as many theorists would pretend; and one art is constantly opening upon another. Arts may extend and find their consummation in other arts; when the mind has exhausted one form, it seeks and finds a more complete expression in another. Thus is a knowledge of the history of music often necessary to the history of the plastic arts.

But the essence of the great interest of art lies in the way it reveals the true feeling of the soul, the secrets of its inner life, and the world of passion that has long accumulated and fermented there before surging up to the surface. Very often, thanks to its depth and spontaneity, music is the first indication of tendencies which later translate

fourteenth century came the same exuberance and exaggeration of virtuosity which is found in other arts. The wonderful skill of the musician evolved the subtleties of counterpoint from the fine proportional notation of the thirteenth century and the complicated notations of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. And, in reaction against that complexity and growing obscurity in music, came forth, as in other arts, the simplicity and sincerity of the Renaissance.

themselves into words, and afterwards into deeds. The *Eroica Symphony* anticipated by more than ten years the awakening of the German nation. The *Meistersinger* and *Siegfried* proclaimed ten years beforehand the imperial triumph of Germany. There are even cases where music is the only witness of a whole inner life, which never reaches the surface.

What does the political history of Italy and Germany in the seventeenth century teach us? A series of court intrigues, of military defeats, of princely weddings, of feastings, of miseries, and of one ruin after another. How is one, then, to account for the miraculous resurrection of these two nations in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries? The work of their musicians gives us an insight. It shows in Germany the treasures of faith and activity which were silently accumulating; it shows simple and heroic characters like Heinrich Schütz who, during the Thirty Years' War, in the midst of the worst disasters that ever devastated a country, quietly went his way, singing his own robust and resolute faith. About him were Johann Cristoph Bach and Michel Bach (ancestors of the great Bach), who seemed to carry with them the quiet presentiment of the genius who followed them. Beside these were Pachelbel, Kuhnau, Buxtehude, Zachow, and Erlebach—great souls, who were shut up all their lives in the narrow sphere of a little provincial town, known only to a few men, without worldly ambition, without hope of leaving anything to posterity, singing for them-

selves alone and for their God; and who, among all their sorrows of home life and public life, slowly and persistently gathered reserves of strength and moral well-being, building stone by stone the great future of Germany. In Italy there was, at the same time, a perfect ebullition of music, which streamed all over Europe. It flooded France, Austria, and England, showing that Italian genius in the seventeenth century was still supreme; and in this splendid exuberance of musical production, a succession of thoughtful geniuses like Monteverde at Mantua, Carissimi at Rome, and Provanzale at Naples gave evidence of the loftiness of soul and purity of heart which was preserved among the frivolities and dissoluteness of Italian courts.

Here is a still more striking example. It is scarcely likely that the world has ever seen a more terrible age than that of the end of the old world—the time of the decomposition of the Roman Empire and the great Invasions. The flame of art, however, continued to burn under that heap of smoking rubbish. A passion for music served to reconcile the Gallic Romans with their barbarian conquerors; for the detestable Cæsars of Rome's waning empire and the Visigoths of Toulouse had an equal relish for concerts; and both the Roman houses and the half-savage camps resounded with the noise of instruments.[1] Clovis had musicians

[1] Claudian says that music was eagerly discussed at the court of Arcadius in the midst of the gravest political business; and Ammianus Marcellinus writes from Rome, about 370: "One hears nothing but singing and the tinkling of notes in every corner."

brought from Constantinople. And the remarkable fact was, not that art was still loved, but that the age created a new kind of art. From this upheaval of humanity sprang an art as perfect and as pure as that of the most finished products of happier times. According to M. Gevaert, the Gregorian chant made its first appearance in the fourth century in the *Alleluia* song—"the cry of the victory of Christianity after two and a half centuries of persecution." The musical masterpieces of the early Church seem to have been produced in the sixth century, between 540 and 600; that is to say, between the invasions of the Goths and the invasions of the Lombards, "at a time which we imagine was represented by an uninterrupted series of wars, massacres, pillages, plagues, famines, and cataclysms of such a kind that St. Gregory saw in them evidence of the decrepitude of the world and premonitory signs of the Last Judgment." In these chants, however, everything breathes of peace and hope in the future. Out of barbarity sprang a gentle art, in which we find pastoral simplicity, clear and sober outlines like those of Greek bas-reliefs, free poetry filled with love of nature, and a touching sweetness of disposition—"a speaking witness of the soul of those who lived amid such terrible disturbance." Nor was this an art of cloisters and convents, shut away in confinement. It was a popular art which prevailed through the whole of the ancient Roman world. From Rome it went to England, to Germany, and to France; and no art was more representative

of its time. Under the reign of the Carolingians it had its golden age, for the princes were enamoured of it. Charlemagne and Louis the Pious spent whole days in singing or listening to chants, and were absorbed by their charm. Charles the Bald, in spite of the troubles of his empire, kept up a correspondence about music, and composed music in collaboration with the monks of the monastery of Saint-Gall—the musical centre of the world in the ninth century. Few occurrences have been more striking than this harvest of art, this smiling efflorescence of music, which was gathered in spite of everything, amid the convulsions of society.

Thus music shows us the continuity of life in apparent death, the flowering of an eternal spirit amidst the ruin of the world. How then should one write the history of these times if one neglected some of their essential characteristics? How should one understand them if one ignored their true inner force? And who knows but such an omission might falsify, not only the aspect of one period of history, but the whole of history itself? Who knows if the words "Renaissance" and "Decadence" do not arise, as in the preceding example, from our limited view of a single aspect of things? An art may decline; but does Art itself ever die? Does it not rather have its metamorphoses and its adaptations to environment? It is quite evident, at any rate, that in a ruined kingdom, wrecked by war or revolution, creative force could only express itself in architecture with difficulty; for architecture needs money and new

structures, besides prosperity and confidence in the future. One might even say that the plastic arts in general have need of luxury and leisure, of refined society, and of a certain equilibrium in civilization, in order to develop themselves fully. But when material conditions are harder, when life is bitter, starved, and harassed with care, when the opportunity of outside development is withheld, then the spirit is forced back upon itself, and its eternal need of happiness drives it to other outlets; its expression of beauty is changed and takes a less external character, and it seeks refuge in more intimate arts, such as poetry and music. It never dies—that I believe with all my heart. There is no death or new birth of the spirit there, for its light has never been extinguished; it has died down only to blaze anew somewhere else. And so it goes from one art to another, as from one people to another. If you only study one art you will naturally be led to think that there are interruptions in its life, a cessation of its heart-beats. On the other hand, if you look at art as a whole you will feel the stream of its eternal life.

That is why I believe that for the foundation of all general history we need a sort of comparative history of all forms of art; and the omission of a single form risks the blurring of the whole picture. History should have the living unity of the spirit of humanity for its object; and she should maintain the cohesion of all its thought.

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Let us try to sketch the place of music in the course of history. That place is far more important than is generally thought; for music goes back to the far distances of civilization. To those who would date it from yesterday, one would recall Aristoxenus of Tarentum, who made the decadence of music begin with Sophocles; and Plato who, with sounder judgment, found that no progress had been made since the seventh century and the melodies of Olympus. From one age to another people have said that music has reached its apogee, and that nothing but its decline can follow. There are no epochs in the world without their music; and there has been no civilized people without its musicians at some time of its history—even those whom we are accustomed to think of as least endowed with the gift of music, as England, for example, which was a great musical nation until the Revolution of 1688.

There are historical conditions more favourable than others to the development of music; and it seems natural, in some respects, that a musical efflorescence should coincide with the decadence of other arts, and even with a country's misfortunes. The examples which we have quoted from the time of the Invasions, and from the seventeenth century in Italy or Germany, incline our belief that way. And this would seem quite logical, since music is an individual form of thought, and for its expression demands nothing but a soul and a voice. An unhappy person, surrounded by ruin and misery, may nevertheless achieve a masterpiece in music or poetry.

But we have been speaking of only one form of music. Music, although it may be an individual art, is also a social art: it may be the offspring of meditation and sorrow, but it may also be that of joy and even frivolity. It accommodates itself to the characters of all people and all time; and when one knows its history, and the diverse forms it has taken throughout the centuries, one is no longer astonished at the contradictory definitions given to it by lovers of beauty. One man may call it architecture in motion, another poetical psychology; one man sees it as a plastic and well-defined art, another as an art of purely spiritual expression; for one theorist, melody is the essence of music, for another this same essence is harmony. And, in truth, it is so; and they are all right.

And so history leads us, not to doubt everything —far from it—but to believe a little of everything; to test general theories by opinions that are true for this particular group of facts and that particular hour in history; to use fragments of the truth. And it is perfectly right to give music every possible kind of name; for it is an architecture of sound in certain centuries of architecture and with certain architectural people, such as the Franco-Flemings of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It is also drawing, line, melody, and plastic beauty, with people who have an appreciation and admiration for form, with painter and sculptor people, like the Italians. It is inner poetry, lyrical outpouring, and philosophic meditation, with poets and philosophers like the Germans.

It adapts itself to all conditions of society. It is a courtly and poetic art under Francis I and Charles IX; an art of faith and fighting with the Reformation; an art of affectation and princely pride under Louis XIV; an art of the *salon* in the eighteenth century. Then it becomes the lyric expression of revolutionaries; and it will be the voice of the democratic societies of the future, as it was the voice of the aristocratic societies of the past. No formula will hold it. It is the song of centuries and the flower of history; its growth pushes upward from the griefs as well as from the joys of humanity.

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We know the important place that music took in ancient civilizations. Greek philosophy testifies to this by the part assigned to music in education, by its close connection with the other arts—science, literature, and drama especially. We find in classic times hymns sung and danced by whole nations, Bacchic dithyrambs, and tragedies and comedies steeped in music; indeed, music enveloped all literary forms, it was everywhere, and it reached from one end to the other of Greek history. It was a world that never ceased to evolve, and its development offered as many varieties of form and style as our modern music. Little by little, pure music, instrumental music, played an almost extravagant part in the social life of the Greek world. It shone

with all magnificence at the court of the Roman emperors, among whom were Nero, Titus, Hadrian, Caracalla, Helagabal, Alexander Severus, Gordian III, Carinus, and Numerian, who were all keen musicians, and even composers and virtuosi of remarkable ability.

Christianity, as it grew, took into its service the force of music, and used it to conquer souls. St. Ambrose fascinated the people, he said, by the melodic charm of his hymns ; and one perceives that of all the artistic heritage of the Roman world, music was the only art which was not only preserved intact at the time of the Invasions, but even blossomed forth more vigorously. In the years that followed, in the Romance and Gothic periods, music kept its high place. St. Thomas Aquinas said that music occupied the first rank among the seven fine arts, and that it was the noblest of civilized sciences. It was taught everywhere. At Chartres, from the eleventh to the sixteenth century, there flourished a great school of music, of a sort both practical and theoretical. At the University of Toulouse there was a Chair of Music in the thirteenth century. At Paris, the centre of the musical world in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, one may read on the list of professors of the University the names of the most famous theorists of music of that time. Music had its place in the *quadrivium*, with arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy. For it was then a study like science and logic, or at any rate pretended to be so. A quotation from Jerome of Moravia, at the end of the

thirteenth century, shows well enough how the æsthetics of that time differed from ours: "The principal difficulty," he says, "in the way of making beautiful notes is sadness of heart." What would Beethoven have thought of that? To the artists of that time, individual feeling seemed a hindrance rather than a stimulus to art; for music was to them something impersonal, demanding, first of all, the calm of a well-ordered mind. And yet its power was never more mighty than in this age, when it was most academic. Outside the tyrannical authority of Pythagoras, which was transmitted to the Middle Ages by Boethius, there were many reasons for this musical intellectualism: moral reasons, belonging to the spirit of a time which was much more rationalistic than mystical, more polemical than inspired; social reasons, coming from the habitual association of thought and power, which linked any man's thought, if it were original, to the thought of all men—as in the *motets*, where different airs with different words were bound together without concern; and, lastly, there were technical reasons, connected with the heavy labour which had to be undergone in order to shape the unformed mass of modern polyphony, which was then fashioned like a statue, ready for the life and thought that were afterwards to enter into it. But this academic art was soon followed by the exquisite art of chivalrous poetry, with its amorous lyricism, its glowing life, and its well-defined popular feeling.

At the beginning of the fourteenth century, a

breath blown from Provence, a first intimation of the Renaissance, made itself felt in Italy. Already the dawn was breaking upon the Florentine composers of Madrigals, *Cascie* (chasses), and *Ballate*, of the time of Dante, Petrarch, and Giotto. Through Florence and Paris the new art, *ars nova*, was disseminated in Europe, and produced, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, that harvest of rich vocal music and its accompaniments, which are now gradually being brought to light. The spirit of liberty, originating in profane music, began to be assimilated by church art; and by the end of the fifteenth century there was a glory of music equal in brilliance to that of other arts in that happy age. The musical literature of the Renaissance is of perhaps unparalleled richness in history. Flemish supremacy, so marked in painting, asserted itself even more in music. The Flemish masters of counterpoint spread over Europe, and were leaders in music over all other people. French and Flemish dominated in Germany and in Italy at Rome. Their works are magnificent structures of sound, with branching outlines and rhythms, and of an abundant beauty; though at first sight they may seem more formal than expressive. But after the second half of the fifteenth century, individualism, which was making itself felt in other arts, began to awake everywhere in music; personal feeling shook itself free; there was a return to nature. Glarean wrote concerning Josquin: "No one has rendered better the passions of the soul in music" (*affectus animi in cantu*). And Vincenzo Galilei called

Palestrina "that great imitator of nature" (*quel grand' imitatore della natura*).[1]

The representation of nature and the expression of passion were, in the eyes of contemporaries, characteristics of the musical Renaissance of the sixteenth century; and such appeared to be the distinctive traits of that art. It does not strike ourselves so much; for, since that time, music's endeavour to reach spiritual truth has been unceasing, and has brought about a continual advance. But what does stir our admiration for the art of that period is the beauty of its form, which has never been surpassed, perhaps never even equalled, except in certain pages of Händel or Mozart. It was an age of pure beauty; for beauty flourished everywhere, was intermingled with every form of social life, and was united to every art. At no time were music and poetry more intimately bound together than in the time of Charles IX; and music was hymned by Dorat, Jodelle, and Belleau. Ronsard called music "the younger sister of poetry," and said also that without music, poetry almost lacked grace, just as music without the melodiousness of poetry was dull and lifeless. Baïf founded an academy of poetry and music, and endeavoured to create in France a language adapted for song, and gave as models metrical verses written after the

[1] Palestrina merited this title in a lesser degree than Josquin, Orlando Lassus, Vittoria, or Jakobus Gallus, and others, who were all sincerer, more expressive, more versatile, and deeper in feeling than he; though his glory shone, nevertheless, over all that epoch, thanks to his immortal style, his classic mind, and the Roman peace which permeates his work.

manner of the Greeks and Latins—treasures whose rich boldness is hardly guessed by the poets and musicians of to-day. Never had France been so truly musical; for music then was not the property of a class, but the possession of the whole nation—of the nobility, the intellectual few, the middle classes, the people, and both Catholic and Protestant Churches. The same rich rising of musical sap was evident in England under Henry VIII and Elizabeth, in the Germany of Luther, in the Geneva of Calvin, and in the Rome of Leo X. Music was the last branch of the Renaissance, but perhaps it was the largest, for it covered the whole of Europe.

The striving for more and more exact expression of feeling in music, during the whole of the sixteenth century, in a series of picturesque and descriptive madrigals, culminated in Italy in the creation of musical tragedy. The influence of former ages intervened at the birth of opera, as it did in the formation and development of the other Italian arts. Opera, in the mind of its founders, was a resurrection of classical tragedy, and was thus more literary than musical. Indeed, even after the dramatic principles of the first Florentine masters had fallen into oblivion, even after music had profitably broken the bonds which attached it to poetry, opera continued to exercise an influence on the spirit of the theatre, especially at the end of the seventeenth century, in a way that has not been fully realized. It would be wrong to regard the triumph of opera in Europe, and the morbid enthusiasm it excited, as something of small

account. We may affirm that without it we should scarcely be acquainted with half the artistic mind of the century, for we should only see the intellectual side of it. It is through opera that we best reach the depths of the sensuality of that time, with its voluptuous imagination, its sentimental materialism, and, in short, if I may so put it, the tottering foundations on which the reason, the will, and the serious business of French society of that great century rested. On the other hand, the spirit of the Reformation was putting out strong roots in German music. English music was also kindled, but died out after the expulsion of the Stuarts and the conquest of the Puritan spirit. Towards the end of the century the thought of Italy was lulled to sleep in the cult of admirable but empty form.

In the eighteenth century, Italian music continued to reflect the sweetness and ease and futility of life. In Germany, the springs of inner harmony, which had been gathering for a century, began to flow like a swift stream in Händel and Bach. France was working at the foundations of a musical theatre, which had been sketched out by the Florentines and by Lully, with the idea of building up a great tragic art after the likeness of Greek drama; and Paris was a kind of workshop, where the finest musicians of Europe met together and vied with one another—French, Italians, Germans, and Belgians, all striving to create a style for tragedy and lyric comedy. The whole of French society took an eager part in these productive struggles, which carved the way for the musical

revolutionaries of the nineteenth century. The best genius of Germany and Italy in the eighteenth century was perhaps in their musicians. France was really more fruitful in other arts than in music; nevertheless, in that direction she climbed higher, I think, than in other arts; for among the fine painters and sculptors in the reign of Louis XV I cannot find a genius comparable to Rameau. Rameau was much more than Lully's successor; for he founded French dramatic art in music, both on a basis of harmonic learning and on the observation of nature. Lastly, the whole French theatre of the eighteenth century, and indeed the whole theatre of Europe, was put into the background by the genius of Gluck, whose works are not only masterpieces in music, but, to my mind, the masterpieces of French tragedy of the eighteenth century.

At the end of the century music was expressing the awakening of a revolutionary individualism, which roused the whole world. The enormous growth of its power of expression, due to the researches of French and German musicians and the sudden development of symphonic music,[1] put at its disposition a richness of means without equal and a means which was almost quite new. In thirty years' time the orchestral symphony and chamber music had produced their masterpieces. The old world, which was then dying, found there its last portraits, and perhaps the most perfect of these were painted by Haydn and Mozart. Then

[1] Thanks especially to the school at Mannheim, which was the cradle of the new instrumental style.

came the Revolution, which after being expressed by the French musicians of the Convention—Gossec, Méhul, Lesueur, and Cherubini—found its most heroic voice in Beethoven—Beethoven, the greatest poet of the Revolution and the Empire, the artist who has most vividly painted the tempests of Napoleonic times, with their anguish, sorrow, and strenuousness of war, and the intoxicated transports of a free spirit.

Then streamed out a wave of romantic poetry—the melodies of Weber, Schubert, Chopin, Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Berlioz—those great lyricists of music, the poets and youthful dreamers of a new age, waking with the dawn in strange disquietude. The ancient world of Italy, in voluptuous idleness, had sung its last song with Rossini and Bellini; the new Italy, the brilliant, noisy Piedmont, made its appearance with Verdi, a singer of the struggles of *Il Risorgimento*. Germany, whose empire had been forming for the past two centuries, found a genius to incarnate its victory in the person of Wagner—the herald who sounded the advent of this military and mysterious empire, the despotic and dangerous master who brought the wild romanticism of Beethoven and Berlioz, the tragedy of the century, to the foot of the Cross, to the mysticism of Parsifal. After Wagner, this atmosphere of mysticism was spread over all Europe by the help of César Franck and his disciples, by Italian and Belgian masters of oratorio, and by a return to classicism and the art of Palestrina and Bach. And while one side of contemporary music

used the wonderful means at hand that had been elaborated by nineteenth-century geniuses in painting the subtle soul of a decadent society, on the other side were the signs of a popular movement, which was giving fresh life to art, by seeking inspiration from popular melodies and by translating into music popular feelings—among the earlier protagonists of which were Bizet and Moussorgsky. This movement is still a little timid and uncertain, but I have hopes that it will grow with the world that it is trying to depict.

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I hope my readers will forgive this rather rough sketch. I have only tried to present a panoramic view of this vast history, by showing how much music is intermingled with the rest of social life.

The thought of the eternal efflorescence of music is a comforting one, and comes like a messenger of peace in the midst of universal disturbance. Political and social history is a never-ending conflict, a thrusting of humanity forward to a doubtful issue, with obstacles at every step, which have to be conquered one by one with desperate persistence. But from the history of art we may disengage a character of fulness and peace. In art, progress is not thought of; for, however far we look behind, we see that perfection has already been attained; and that man is absurd who thinks the efforts of the centuries have advanced us a step nearer beauty since the days of St. Gregory and Palestrina.

There is nothing sad or humiliating in the idea ; on the contrary, art is humanity's dream—a dream of light and liberty and quiet power. It is a dream whose thread is never broken, and there is no fear for the future. In our anxiety and pride we tell ourselves that we have reached the pinnacle of art, and are on the eve of a decline. That has been said since the beginning of the world. In every century people have sighed, " All has been said ; we have come too late." Well, everything may have been said ; yet everything is still to say. Art, like life, is inexhaustible ; and nothing makes us feel the truth of this better than music's ever-welling spring, which has flowed through the centuries until it has become an ocean.

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THE BEGINNINGS OF OPERA

THE invention of Opera is generally attributed to the Florentines at the end of the sixteenth century. It was said to be the work of a little group of musicians and poets and fashionable people, who gathered about the court of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, or, to speak more exactly, in the *salon* of a great nobleman, the Count Bardi, between 1590 and 1600. Among the names associated with the creation of this dramatic and musical form, which was to have such astonishing adventures in the world, we find those of Vincenzo Galilei (the father of the great Galileo), the poet Ottavio Rinuccini, the scholar Jacopo Corsi, the singers Peri and Caccini, and Emilio de' Cavalieri, who was the director of the plays and fêtes at Florence.

The history of Opera has been recounted a good many times during the last few years. But the error that historians have fallen into[1] up to the present has been in believing, or in allowing others to believe, that this distinctive form of art sprang in full battle array from the heads of a few inventors. Creations of this kind are rare in history. It is as well to recall the quiet words of a motto, inscribed on the front of a house in Vicenza :

"*Omnia prætereunt, redeunt, nihil interit.*"[2]

[1] I do not except the author of these lines.
[2] All things come and go, but nothing dies.

The thing we call a creation is often nothing but a re-creation ; and in the present discussion one may pertinently ask if that Opera, which the Florentines believed in all good faith they created, was not in existence, except for some slight differences, long before their time—even from the beginning of the Renaissance.[1] And this is what I want to show, by getting my evidence, not from historians of music, but from historians of literature and the plastic arts ; for curiously enough musicians have nearly always ignored the latter. It is unhappily a too-common habit of historians to isolate a particular art from the history of other arts and the rest of intellectual and social life. Now this method must necessarily lead to factitious constructions that have no connection with living realities ; and the danger of this is very great in the analysis of a form like Opera, in which all arts are united. I shall therefore try to put Opera into its place in the general history of Italian art, and show the extent of a very ancient movement in music and poetry, which was the natural result of dramatic evolution through several centuries.[2]

[1] Since these lines were written, Herr Hugo Riemann has arrived at analogous conclusions by a different road. In his History of Music, under *Das Zeitalter der Renaissance*, he discusses the evolution, not of Italian dramatic forms, as I am trying to do here, but of strictly musical forms, and shows that the Florentine monody of 1600 was not an invention, but a return to the musical traditions of the Florentine school of the early fourteenth century.

[2] As a guide in my researches, I shall take Signor Alessandro d'Ancona's celebrated book on the Origin of the Theatre in Italy (1877), and the excellent works of Signor Angelo Solerti : his monumental *Life of Tasso* (1895) and his many essays on the Origins of Musical Drama.

I

THE "SACRE RAPPRESENTAZIONI" IN FLORENCE AND THE "MAGGI" OF TUSCANY

We know that the first attempts at Florentine opera at the end of the sixteenth century (which were taken up and developed at the beginning of the seventeenth century by Monteverde) were two pastorals with music—*Dafne*, used from 1594 to 1608, in turn by Corsi, Peri, Caccini, and Marco da Gagliano; and *Euridice* (or an *Orfeo*) which was used from 1600 to 1607 by Peri, Caccini, Monteverde, and, later, by Stefano Landi (1619), and Luigi Rossi (1647).

Now since 1474, there had been played at Mantua —the same Mantua where a hundred and forty years later Monteverde's *Orfeo* and Gagliano's *Dafne* were played—an *Orfeo* by the celebrated Politian, with music by Germi, and (some years later, in 1486) a *Dafne* with music by Gian Pietro della Viola.

Thus in 1474, in the bloom of the Renaissance, and at the time when Botticelli and Ghirlandajo made their *début*, when Verrocchio was working at his bronze David, when the youthful Leonardo da Vinci was studying at Florence, and a year before the birth of Michelangelo—at this time the poet *par excellence* of the Renaissance, Angelo Politian, a friend of Lorenzo de' Medici, put on the lyric stage, with ringing success, a subject that three centuries of masterpieces did not exhaust—a subject that Gluck was to take up exactly three centuries afterwards.[1]

[1] The first performance of *Orfeo* in Paris was in 1774.

But this *Orfeo* of Politian was in itself far from being a new form of art. Politian, when writing it, had taken the *Sacre Rappresentazioni* of the Florentine theatre of his time as a model. So in order to be acquainted with the origins of Opera, we must first know something about this ancient form of drama, which seems to go back to the fourteenth century.

At this date, indeed, we find two forms of play in Italy, in which music was closely associated with the dramatic action; these were the *Sacre Rappresentazioni* and the *Maggi* (Representations of May), which are fairly well known to-day, thanks to the researches of Signor Alessandro d'Ancona. Of these two forms, one was specially urban and the other more rural; and they seem to be almost contemporaries and have the same habitation: that is to say, the *Maggi* were to be found in the country places of Tuscany, the land of Pisa and Lucca; and the *Sacre Rappresentazioni* in Florence itself. As the people of the most artistic town in the world contributed to the improvement of the *Sacre Rappresentazioni*, it is natural that they developed in quite a different way from the *Maggi*.[1] But these latter have an historical interest, for they were more popular and, in consequence, more conservative and

[1] It must not be forgotten that the first half of the fourteenth century was a sort of spring-time in the music of Italy. The recent discoveries of Herr Johannes Wolf have brought to light the extraordinary originality of the Florentine masters at that time—masters such as Johannes de Florentia (Giovanni da Cascia), Ghirardellus de Florentia, Paolo da Firenze, Francesco Landino, and many others. (See Volume II and III of the *Geschichte der Mensuralnotation von* 1250–1460.)

less yielding to progress; so that they have kept until our own day—for they still exist—certain primitive forms of the *Sacra Rappresentazione*, which the latter lost or quickly modified.

At first the *Sacre Rappresentazioni* were scenic actions, setting forth the mysteries of faith or Christian legends. They were not unlike our Mystery plays, and they were often called by that name. According to Signor d'Ancona, their birth was in Florence, and was the result of a union of the *Devozione* of the fourteenth century (which was the dramatization of a religious office, in particular the office for Holy Thursday and Good Friday) with the national fêtes of Florence in honour of its patron saint, St. John. These fêtes, which already existed in the thirteenth century, and probably before that time, gave place to stately processions, over which the Florentines spent months of preparation. Represented on chariots were different religious subjects, such as The Battle of the Angels, The Creation of Adam, The Temptation, The Expulsion from Paradise, Moses, and so forth; and after the march-past, the occupants of each chariot gave a play in an open square in the town. These plays were nothing but showy pantomimes with very little dialogue. But music played a great part in them. The scenario of a representation by Viterbo, in 1462, which has been reprinted at length by Signor Ancona, may give an idea of what took place.

Pope Pius II was present at the time. The town was full of theatres, for they had been erected in every square and in all the important streets. Each

cardinal had his own theatre. Representations of The Lord's Supper, The Life of St. Thomas d'Aquinas, and other subjects were given. One of the finest plays was that given at the theatre of Cardinal Teano. "The square," says the chronicler, "was decorated with white and blue cloth and gay rugs, and with arches covered with ivy and flowers. On every pillar stood a youthful angel; and there were eighteen of them, whose business it was to sing by turns some melodious chants. In the middle of the square was the Holy Tomb. Soldiers slept at its foot, and angels guarded it. On the arrival of the Pope, an angel descended from the sky, by means of a rope from the roof of the tent; and among the airs he sang was a hymn which told of the Resurrection. Then there was a tense silence, as though a miracle were about to be performed, and this was followed by a deafening detonation, an explosion of powder like a thunderclap. The soldiers awaked in fright, and Christ appeared to them. He was a red-haired man, crowned with a diadem, and carrying the banner of the Cross. He showed his wounds to the people, and sang in Italian verse of the salvation of the world."

In a neighbouring theatre another cardinal had arranged a representation of the Assumption of the Virgin. This was played by a beautiful young girl, and she was carried by angels to heaven, where the Father and the Son received her. And then, says the chronicler, there were "songs of celestial cohorts, the playing of magic instruments, lively commotion, and the laughter of all heaven" (*Un*

cantare delle schiere dei celesti spiriti, un toccare di magici strumenti, un rallegrarsi, un gestire, un riso di tutto il cielo).

And so the two essential elements of that primitive play were action (or gesture) and music. The element that was still wanting was speech. Music in the theatre is therefore anterior to speech.

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The originality of the Florentines was shown in their introduction of speech into musical plays; and by the fusion of the mimic form of the St. John fêtes with the speech form of the church *Devozioni* the *Sacra Rappresentazione* was created.

The study of these *Sacre Rappresentazioni* springs naturally from our subject, and we must turn to Signor d'Ancona's works to learn something about them. Here, with his help, I need only dwell upon the place that music held in these plays.

We note, first of all, the startling fact that these pieces were *entirely sung;* and from Vincenzo Borghini we get the following curious record:

> "The first person," he says, "to suppress song in the Representations was l'Araldo, at the beginning of the sixteenth century. That does not mean his play was not sung, but that the introduction to it was spoken (*recitato a parole*), which at first seemed rather strange (*che parve nel principio cosa strana*), though it afterwards grew in favour and was put into use (*però fu*

gustata a poco a poco, e messa in uso). And it was an extraordinary thing how the old usage of singing was dropped quite suddenly (*ed è cosa mirabile quanto quel modo di cantare si lasciasse in un tratto*)."[1]

Thus, if we are to believe this text, the first musical play in which speech was introduced does not go much further back than the beginning of the sixteenth century. There is some irony in the fact that a dramatic improvement at the beginning of the sixteenth century should result in suppressing music; while at the end of the same century another improvement brought music back again. Thus the perpetual see-saw of artistic evolution goes on—*Corsi e Ricorsi.*

Let us now consider the form of the songs in these plays. The music of them has been lost; but we may get a good idea of it from the *Maggi*, the

[1] Signor d'Ancona makes a few reservations about this statement of Borghini's. He quotes from the Prologue of S. Giovanni e Paolo the following verses:

" *Senza tumulto sien le voci chete,*
Massimamente poi quando si canta."

" Do not make a noise, *above all* while there is singing "—which leads us to believe that there was not always singing. But it is sufficient to note that in a certain number of these plays music accompanied all the text. This character of a play in song is very marked in the prologues (*Annunziazione*) of many of the pieces:

" *Recitevem con dolci voci e* canti." (*S. Barbara.*)

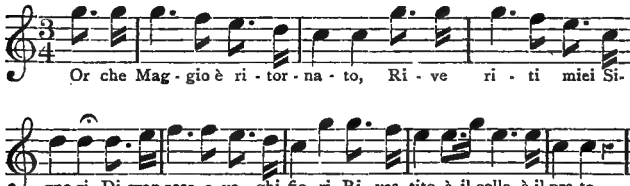
" We shall tell our story with melodious voice and song."

" *Questo mistero glorioso e santo*
Vedrete recitar con dolce canto." (*Resurrezione.*)

" You shall see this glorious and holy mystery told in sweet songs."

popular plays of the Tuscan countryside, which have been preserved, with very little change, from the fifteenth century until our own day, with music which closely resembles that used in these primitive theatres.

The *Maggi* are written in stanzas of four eight-syllable verses, the first verse rhyming with the fourth, and the second with the third. The music is a perpetual plain-song adorned by a few trills and vocal ornaments. The song is slow and uniform, ordinarily without instrumental accompaniment, though sometimes there was a part for the violin and double-bass. It was written in the major scale, and the rhythm was marked by the accentuation of the first note in each bar, which corresponded to the third and seventh syllables in each verse. Here is an example which Signor Alessandro d'Ancona has had the kindness to send me :



("Now that May has returned, honoured sirs, beautiful roses and lovely flowers have clothed the hillside and the meadow.")

This cantillation is repeated in the strophes that follow; but the singers were in the habit of introducing *bravura* passages, which somewhat lessened

the monotony. This kind of air was sung in one *Maggio* after another, and in so traditional a manner, that one often saw marked on the text of these rustic dramas: "*Da cantarsi sull'aria del Maggio*" ("To be sung to the May air").

It must be remembered that only the less refined forms of drama are referred to here; and that the *Sacra Rappresentazione* was of a far more artistic character, since the best poets and musicians in Florence exercised their talents on it. But the principle of the application of words to music would be always the same, at any rate in the fifteenth century. Certain parts of the play, of a traditional character—Prologues (*Annunziazioni*), Epilogues (*Licenze*), prayers, and so forth—were, without doubt, sung to some special *cantilena*. Other music of a varied character was also interpolated in the *Sacra Rappresentazione*. This might be in the form of the usual liturgies (*Te Deum* and *Laudi*) or of secular songs and dance music, as certain of the *libretti* show: one may be marked, "This piece should be sung like the *Vaghe montanine* of Sacchetti"; another is labelled "*bel canto*"; one has "Pilate replies by singing *alla imperiale*";[1] and another, "Abraham joyously utters a *Stanza a ballo*." There were songs for two and three voices; and the play was preceded by an instrumental prelude, which followed the song prelude; for they had a little orchestra of sorts, and we see mentioned, here and there, violins, viols, and lutes.

But that is not all; for the acts of the *Sacra*

[1] The Imperial was a kind of dance.

Rappresentazione were full of Interludes of an elaborate kind. They represented such things as jousts, chases, and combats on foot and on horseback; and the ballet was of as much importance then as it is now in grand opera. Every form of dance was there, but especially: the *Moresca*, a favourite dance in Italy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, like a *saltarello* or lively jig in three time, of which we may find an example at the end of Monteverde's *Orfeo*; the *Mattaccino*, which was danced with bells on the feet and unsheathed swords (this was still used in Luigi Rossi's *Orfeo*); the *Saltarello*, the *Galliard*, the *Imperial*, the *Pavan*, the *Siciliano*, the *Roman*, the *Venetian*, the *Florentine*, the *Bergamask*, the *Chiaranzana*, the *Chianchiara*, and the *Passamezzo*. Besides this the actors sang *laudi*, *canzoni*, drinking songs, and choruses—hunting choruses, in *S. Margherita* and *S. Uliva*. These songs were sometimes written for solo singers and sometimes for several voices. And so in these Interludes there grew up, alongside the lyric drama, another form of opera—the ballet-opera, which was to develop later on at the expense of the lyric drama; and, in time, the Interludes themselves overpowered the rest of the *Sacra Rappresentazione* and took a disproportionate place in them.

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These old plays bore resemblance to Opera in yet another way, and that was in the machinery they involved—the *Ingegni teatrali*, as it was called at

that time. The greatest artists of the Renaissance did not disdain to expend their wits upon it, artists like Brunelleschi at Florence, and Leonardo da Vinci at Milan.

Brunelleschi and Cecca first of all invented some machinery for the processions of St. John; and some of the apparatus, the *Nuvole* (the clouds), has been described by Vasari as the admiration and terror of the spectators. This was of service in the appearances of angels and saints, who were seen flying at giddy heights. Brunelleschi then applied his talents to the *Sacre Rappresentazioni;* and the following is a description, according to Vasari, of how he realized Paradise in the *Rappresentazione dell' Annunziata,* given in the church of S. Felice in Piazza, at Florence.[1]

"In the vault of the church roof one saw a sky filled with living figures, and about them shone and sparkled a multitude of lights. Twelve little angels with wings and golden hair took one another by the hand and danced aloft. Above their heads were three garlands of lights, and below them stars appeared—one might have said they were treading on clouds. Then eight children, grouped about a luminous pedestal, descended from the vault. On the pedestal itself stood an angel about fifteen years old, who was securely held by an invisible apparatus of iron, which

[1] The *Sacre Rappresentazioni* were usually performed in a church, or in the open place before a church. They were played between vespers and dusk; and the actors were young people, who formed a part of the "Societies of Piety."

allowed him, however, some freedom of movement. When the pedestal had reached the stage, the angel greeted the Virgin, and the Annunciation was complete. Then the angel returned to the sky, to his companions who were singing, while the other angels danced around in the air."[1]

The audience also saw God the Father surrounded by a host of angels and suspended in space. Brunelleschi manufactured doors so that the sky could open and shut; and these were manipulated by ropes, and their movement made a noise like thunder. When the doors were shut they formed a platform on which the sacred personages dressed—they were green-rooms for angels.

This Paradise in the church of S. Felice was the model of the *Ingegni teatrali* in the fifteenth century. Cecca still further improved Brunelleschi's inventions, and at the church of S. Maria del Carmine, where there was more space, two skies were constructed for the *Ascension of the Saviour*. In one of these skies the Christ was carried aloft by a host of angels, while the other sky scintillated with stars and with "numberless lights; and there was soft music, so that it seemed like a true Paradise."

The beauty of these plays and their superiority to all operas, may easily be imagined. The sacredness of the picture, and the immensity of it, would give a poetic mystery as nothing else could do. It

[1] A musical play very like this was still being performed in Florence in 1620, with mechanical apparatus by Giulio Parigi. The poem was by Rinuccini, the author of the first Florentine operas.

was not a game, but a scene of real action, in which the public shared ; there was no stage, for the stage was everywhere.

Sometimes fire would descend from on high to rest on the heads of the apostles, or to destroy infidels. This was not unaccompanied with danger ; and S. Spirito was burnt in 1471 on the occasion of one of these plays. At Arezzo, in 1556, there was a still worse accident ; and Signor d'Ancona tells us that during a representation of *Nabuccodonosor*, the scene of Paradise took fire, and the actor who played the part of the Eternal Father was burnt. This machinery had a very important share in the *Sacre Rappresentazioni ;* and there was no piece without its apotheoses and its mountings into heaven, without the shattering of buildings struck by thunder, and other phantasmagoria such as we see in our own modern fairy plays.

To all this must be added a whole shopful of fantastic accessories and a dramatic menagerie that would have made Wagner jealous, with its stock of rams, dragons, toads, birds, singing mermaids, and all the rest of the fairy-tale belongings, sublime and foolish, which are to be found in the Tetralogy of the Nibelungs. But the Golden Legend abounds with much more fantastic inventions than the Edda ; and Siegfried's dragon was already a familiar personality to the spectators of the *Sacre Rappresentazioni.* In *S. Margherita,* in *Constantino,* and in *S. Giorgio,* monsters emitted fire from their nostrils and devoured children and cattle. Other animals were also on view, such as lions, leopards, wolves,

bears, and serpents, not to mention the stag by St. Eustace's crucifix. Signor d'Ancona speaks feelingly of the two excellent lions in *S. Onofrio*, which after that saint's death, dug his grave and then took the body of their master, by his feet and by his head, and reverently buried it. One might have thought it was a scene from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

If we summarize the chief characteristics of these plays—the accented and continuous song, the importance of machinery, the mixture of tragedy and fairy-tale, the interludes and ballets introduced without purpose—we shall see many likenesses to grand Opera. What is lacking seems to be a truly dramatic declamation, a recitative modelled on the speaking voice; though it is rather difficult to suppose, when our documentary evidence is so incomplete, that no composer tried it. It is indeed more than likely that it was tried; for we must remember that the composers of these plays had among them the most celebrated musicians of the time—men like Alfonso della Viola at Ferrara. At any rate, it is certain that the *Sacre Rappresentazioni* of the fifteenth century were closer to opera than to tragedy or drama; and that they did not differ very much more from the opera at the end of the sixteenth century than the Florentine pre-Raphaelites differed from the Carraccian school of painting.[1]

[1] The *Sacre Rappresentazioni* were played until the second half of the sixteenth century—until 1566 in Florence, and until 1539 in Rome, where every year the work-people played the

Many of these plays were indeed like pre-Raphaelite paintings; and who knows if the plays did not inspire the paintings? M. Émile Mâle has shown the influence of our own Mystery plays on art at the end of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth century.[1] It is not unlikely that a similar influence was exercised by the Tuscan *Rappresentazioni* on the works of Florentine painters. The scenic information, such as that given in *Abram ed Isac*, which Signor d'Ancona quotes, call to mind the frescoes of Botticelli and Ghirlandajo in the Sixtine Chapel. "Abraham is about to sit down

Passion at the Coliseum. An end was put to these plays in Rome because after each performance the populace sacked the Jewish quarter there. (See Marco Vatasso, *Per la storia del dramma sacro in Italia*, 1903, Rome.) Naturally these productions were full of perversions, and the pagan immodesty of those times was boldly displayed, as in a performance of 1541, at San Domenico di Sessa, where in *La Creazione di Adamo ed Eva* the author, a canon, played Adam stark naked, and was an enormous success. More daring still was the *Spectaculum divi Francisci*, played at Naples at the beginning of the sixteenth century, where the friar in the part of St. Francis played in a scene of seduction, also unclothed. (See A. d'Ancona, *lib. cit.*)

We must especially remember as an important fact that the *Rappresentazioni* outside Florence were like showy pageants, with parades and processions; while in Florence itself they were almost all of a dramatic and recitative character—"*fatto in modo di recitazione.*" Attention is called to this, since the invention of musical recitative, which was to be the foundation of opera, was due to Florence; and in this we see a national trait and part of the genius of the race.

[1] A reciprocal influence, in many cases. It is difficult to determine which of the two has served as model for the other. What is sure is that they modified one another. Ste.-Beuve remarks: "A mystery play was sometimes performed before a church, and it was like putting its façade into motion, or like an animated and elaborated supplement to its doorway and rose-window. Whether coloured, or sculptured, or on the stage, the same personages were there." (*Tableau de la poésie française et du théâtre au XVI^e siècle*, 1869.)

on a raised piece of ground, with Sarah beside him. Isaac is at their feet on the right ; and on the left, a little on one side, are Ishmael and Hagar. At the far side of the scene, on the right, is the altar where Abraham will make his orisons. On the left is a wooded mountain, and beside it stands a great tree, from the foot of which a stream will flow at the right moment." It is a landscape which lacks unity, and yet has a musical charm in its quiet and restful simplicity.

But the spirit of the time was about to change, and with it changed music, poetry, painting, architecture, drama—all the arts together.

II

LATIN COMEDIES AND PRODUCTIONS IN THE CLASSIC STYLE

The great fundamental change in the world of art at the beginning of the sixteenth century was the triumph of antiquity and the conquest of Humanism. This conquest, which was manifested in architecture and sculpture by the study and imitation of Roman monuments, was evident also in the theatre, not only in Italian tragedies of a classical style, such as *Sofonisba* by Giorgio Trissino di Vincenza (which appeared in 1515, and is far from being a commonplace work), or Giovanni Rucellai's *Orestes*, but by a great number of plays in the Latin tongue. This classic spirit revolutionized art, and it is important to understand why it did so. We have almost forgotten to-day the meaning of this great movement ;

and it is often academically dealt with like a piece of frozen learning. It is possible that it did a good deal of harm and destroyed a number of interesting things ; but there was nothing dead or conventional at the time of the Renaissance.

The Renaissance could have never possessed the power, the popularity, and the universality that marked it, if it had been nothing but an archæological movement. Nor must it be supposed that these Latin plays were exceptional exhibitions of learning for an audience of fashionable pedants. In Rome, Urbino, Mantua, Venice, and Ferrara, they were constantly produced, from 1480 to about 1540, and in the largest theatres. Ferrara especially was the home of this art—Ferrara that played so large a part in the history of thought, poetry, music, and the Italian drama, since it was associated with Ariosto, Tasso, Savonarola, and Frescobaldi, and was the centre of these Latin plays, and the cradle of pastorals in music—Ferrara, where, in a single week, at the fêtes of 1502 in honour of the marriage of Lucretia Borgia with the son of Ercole d'Este, five comedies of Plautus were played in a theatre which held more than five thousand spectators. And year after year such plays were attended by the nobility and the famous men of Italy.

Whence could such a passion come ? It would seem to be inexplicable by an infatuation of the moment. Fashion may make a success during one, two, or even five years ; but nothing could stop the fashionable world from being bored, and from showing its boredom, if it had to be interested in the

same thing during fifty or sixty years. For, far from diminishing, the taste for classic art grew stronger as the years went on. We must therefore go deeper down for the reason of this phenomenon.

Paradoxical though it may seem, this resurrection of the classic in art was a reaction of the spirit of that time against the now old-fashioned spirit of the Gothic artists and the *Sacre Rappresentazioni*. It is not necessary here to compare the two spirits and the two arts. It is possible the older spirit was superior to the new; but its fault was that it was old, and no longer responded to the needs of the age. In the time of the Medici the *Sacre Rappresentazioni* were already out-of-date, and could no longer be taken seriously, above all by those who belonged to the aristocracy or to the artist class, both of which were at the head of the new movement. Signor d'Ancona shows us how when a comedy of Plautus or Terence was revived, it came as a relief; and the princes, the courtiers, and the intellectuals of the clever but corrupt society of the time recognized themselves in the truthful and lively portraits drawn by the old Romans. The sons who sneered at their fathers, the robber servants, the greedy mistresses, the parasitic toadies—these were all things of the day. Christ and His apostles, the martyrs and saints, no longer existed. To sing of Christian heroism, and to seem to believe in it, meant assuming a falsehood. To feel the truth of classic comedies, and to be amused by them, needed only a knowledge of the Latin tongue. Their spirit was that of the

time ; and because they supplied the wants of all, the infatuation for them was universal.

This kind of reaction is always most violent against the epoch which is nearest to us ; and no generation is so well hated in art as the generation that goes before it. In this case the reaction was paraded openly in anti-clerical professions of faith, which were characteristic of many of these productions. One of the first, that of the *Menecmi*, played in Florence on May 12, 1488, by the grammar pupils of Paolo Comparini, in the presence of Lorenzo de' Medici, Politian, and the court, was preceded by a prologue in Latin, where Comparini charges full tilt against the enemies of Humanism, and in outspoken periphrases apostrophizes the priests, or, more correctly speaking, the monks :

> *" Cucullati, lignipedes, cincti funibus,*
> *Superciliosum, incurvicervicum pecus :*
> *Qui quod ab aliis habitu et cultu dissentiunt,*
> *Tristesque vultu vendunt sanctimonias,*
> *Censuram sibi quamdam et tyrannidem occupant,*
> *Pavidamque plebem territant minaciis."*

(" These hooded men in their wooden sandals, with cords round their waists, this gloomy and crafty rabble, because they have different manners and dress from other people and because they sell indulgences with a frowning air, assume the part of critics and tyrants, and terrify the cowardly populace by their threats.")

It was a declaration of war ; and if others did not proclaim it quite so frankly as Comparini, they felt, nevertheless, that this resurrection of classi-

cism was an awakening of the lay spirit. The High Church of that time, which was not at all religious, was openly associated with the movement; and Leo X showed his aversion to the monks with considerable energy. Another curious fact, which has not had enough stress laid upon it, is the share taken by the Jews in the restoration of the ancient drama in some parts of the country. At Mantua, especially, where the Jewish colony was large, Latin plays were given by the Jews in the sixteenth century on various occasions. The duke and his court were often present, and Bernardo Tasso (the father of Torquato) was sometimes stage manager.

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No one played a greater part in this change of the theatrical spirit than Lorenzo de' Medici. He was a versatile man, quick to seize upon another's weakness, and taking infinite pains to succeed in all he undertook. Two centuries later, Mazarin, who was a politician of the same kind, sought to occupy Frenchmen with amusement; and before the Fronde the Italian opera played an important share in his home policy. I have tried to show this in another place—in the essay on Luigi Rossi.[1] Lorenzo de' Medici acted in a similar way. Savonarola accuses him, and not without reason, of "occupying the mind of the populace with plays and fêtes, so that they should be thinking of their pleasure and not of their tyrant." He knew well

[1] See page 76.

the power of the theatre and of music over the society of his time, and he took care not to neglect his opportunity. But he had this advantage over Mazarin—he was not only a dilettante, but a great artist; he did not content himself with exercising an indirect influence over art, he himself set new models, and opened out new channels.

He was a poet and a musician; he wrote dances anonymously, and probably some of them are still to be found in certain collections of the time. He transformed the *canti carnascialeschi* (carnival songs) into dance rhythms. Up till then they had been modelled on traditional airs; but Lorenzo wished to vary the melody, the words, and the ideas, so he wrote *canzoni* with different metres, and set them to new airs. One of the most celebrated songs of this kind was a *canzone* for three voices by Arrigo Tedesco, choirmaster of the Chapel San Giovanni,[1] which was to be sung at masques and which depicted vendors of *berriquocoli* (spiced bread) and *confortini* (gingerbread).[2]

Lorenzo de' Medici brought this same spirit of innovation into the *Sacre Rappresentazioni*. He began by introducing pagan subjects and heroes into the Procession of St. John, such as the triumphs of Cæsar, of Pompey, of Octavius, and of Trajan. Very soon the chariots of religious subjects disappeared; and then Lorenzo, with the aid

[1] This Arrigo Tedesco is none other than the celebrated Flemish musician, Heinrich Isaak (1450–1517).

[2] The verses of the oldest *canti carnascialeschi* were published in 1550 and 1760. (See the works of Adrien de la Fage, Angelo Solerti, and Alessandro d'Ancona, on this subject.)

of his poets, worked to get the religious element out of the *Rappresentazioni* altogether. In 1489, he wrote *San Giovanni e Paulo*, in which his son Julian played, and which expressed, in the person of Constantine, his distaste for power and the intention he had at that time of abdicating. This fine work is full of eloquent tirades on the duties of princes, and is a true classical tragedy after the manner of Corneille—a *Cinna* which might have been written by Louis XIV.[1]

It was during this current of thought that Politian, the friend of Lorenzo, wrote his *Orfeo*, which marks the passage of Florentine religious tragedy to classical pastoral tragedy. In its primitive form, as it was played at Mantua in 1474, it was still fashioned after the model of the *Sacre Rappresentazioni*. The whole piece was played in scenes placed side by side, as they were in the old Mystery plays. Politian divided these later into five acts, and gave them a more classical form. This transition from *Sacra Rappresentazione* to classical tragedy is also shown in the *Cephalo* of Nicolò da Correggio (Ferrara, 1486), and in the *Timone* of Boiardi (Ferrara, 1492).

The old classical plays then began to be revived in all parts of the country: at Rome by Sixtus IV, Alexander VI, and Leo X; at Venice, where the nobility showed great interest in them; and at

[1] One of the Medici family, Lorenzo di Pier Francesco de' Medici, the grandfather of Lorenzaccio, also wrote a *Rappresentazione della Invenzione della Croce* (1482 or 1493), where he violently attacked the tyranny of Lorenzo the Magnificent.

Ferrara especially, thanks to Ercole I d'Este. In his great admiration of the classic ages, this prince built a splendid theatre to hold five thousand people, of which Ariosto superintended the construction; and he entertained a company of famous actors, and even journeyed with them across Italy in order to introduce them to other courts.

. . . . . .

We will now consider in what way music was associated with these productions.

In March 1518 Ariosto's *Suppositi* was given at the Vatican. In a letter sent to the duke of Ferrara on March 8, 1518, Pauluzo says: "After every act there was an interlude for music—for fifes, bagpipes, two cornets, viols, lutes, and a little organ with various sounds. There was also a flute and a voice, which gave much pleasure. A harmony of voices was also to be heard. . . . The last interlude was a *Moresca* (a dance), which set forth the fable of the Gorgons." The scenery was by Raphael.

At Urbino, between 1503 and 1508, Bibbiena's *Calandria* was given at the palace of the duke Guidubaldo. A letter from Balthazar Castiglione describes the sumptuous spectacle, and shows that the scenery had lost nothing of its importance since the days of the *Sacre Rappresentazioni*. From the verdure which adorned the roof of the theatre hung chandeliers garlanded with roses. "The first interlude was a *Moresca* depicting Jason, and was played by a beautiful youth, clad in armour, with

sword and buckler. He entered dancing. On the other side of the stage two bulls were pawing the ground and emitting fire from their mouths. Jason then yoked them, and made them till the earth while he sowed dragon's teeth. Then, one after another, men sprang up fully armed, danced a fierce *Moresca*, and afterwards slaughtered one another. Finally Jason appeared with the golden fleece on his shoulders, and danced excellently.

"The second interlude represented Venus and her chariot. She was seated, unclad, with a torch in her hand. The chariot was drawn by two doves, ridden by two little Cupids. Behind the chariot four young girls danced a *Moresca* with lighted torches in their hands.

"The third interlude showed the chariot of Neptune. It was drawn by two monsters, which were half horses and half covered with feathers and fishes' scales. At the back, six other monsters danced a *brando*.

"In the fourth interlude Juno's chariot was seen, resting on a cloud, and drawn by two fine peacocks. Before it strutted two eagles and two ostriches; and behind it were two seagulls and two parrots. The whole assembly then danced a *brando*.

"After the play, a little Cupid explained the meaning of the interludes. Then music was heard from four invisible viols, and also from four voices with the viols, who sang a prayer to Love set to a very beautiful air."

We now see what place plastic art had in the theatre. The dramatic element had been almost

eliminated, and we have, instead, the essence of the ballet-opera before Lully.

At Ferrara, at the fêtes of 1502, five plays of Plautus were given—the *Epidico, Bacchidi, Miles gloriosus, Asinaria,* and *Casina.* Music and dancing were not neglected, and there were songs, choruses, and ballets, sung and danced by soldiers dressed in classic garments. The decorations and scenery were by Pellegrino da Udine, Dosso Dossi, Giovanni da Imola, Fino de Marsigli, and Brasone. Giraldi Cinzio, in one of his *Scritti estetici,* says that at the end of the acts, an apparatus rose up in the middle of the stage, bearing with it musicians magnificently apparelled. But the music was more often played behind the scenes.

At Milan, where a taste for these plays had been introduced by the daughter of the duke of Ferrara, Beatrice d'Este, wife of Lodovico il Moro, Leonardo da Vinci assisted with the plays given in 1483, and in particular with the *Paradiso* of Bernardo Bellincioni. He constructed his Paradise with seven revolving planets; and they were represented by men who sang the praises of the duchess.

In another production at Pavia, the seven Fine Arts sang a *canzonetta,* after having spoken two stanzas apiece. Then Saturn appeared with the four Elements. Saturn spoke, but the four Elements sang: *Cantiam tutti: Viva il Moro e Beatrice!*

Generally speaking, no classic piece, or piece written in a classic style, was played in the sixteenth century without music. Trissino, who had admitted nothing but the singing of choruses into his tragedies,

acknowledged, in his *Sesta divisione della Poetica*, that dances and musical interludes were introduced everywhere. We know the names of some of the composers: Alfonso della Viola, for the *Orbecche* of Cinzio (Ferrara, 1541); Antonio dal Cornetto, for the *Egle* of Cinzio (Ferrara, 1545); Claudio Merulo, for the *Troiane* of Lodovico Dolce (Venice, 1566); Andrea Gabrieli, for the *Edipo* of Giustiniani (Vicenza, 1585). G. B. Doni, who was the great writer about Italian opera in the seventeenth century, tells us: "At all times it was customary to combine dramatic performances with some kind of plain-song either in the form of an interlude in between the acts, or in the acts themselves, when the subject of the play was suitable."

We therefore see that if music took a smaller place in this aristocratic and learned sort of play, its part remained, nevertheless, an important one. The text of the play was spoken: but numerous fragments of song were introduced, and the interludes themselves were considerably developed. The latter lent themselves to the advancement of scenic decoration and machinery and the general get-up of the subject; and the greatest masters of Italian art devoted their talents to them. We have already mentioned Leonardo at Milan and Raphael at Rome; to these artists we must add Andrea del Sarto (for the *Mandragore*, 1525) and Aristote de San Gallo at Florence; Dosso Dossi and Pellegrino d'Udine at Ferrara; Baldassare Peruzzi (for Bibbiena's *La Calandra*), Franciabigio, Ridolfo Ghirlandajo, Granacci, Tribolo, Sodoma, Franco,

Genga, Indaco, Gherardi, Soggi, and Lappoli at Rome. These interludes, which were of ever-increasing magnificence up to the end of the sixteenth century, went to the making of the gorgeous ballet-operas of the seventeenth century.[1]

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III

PASTORALS IN MUSIC AND TORQUATO TASSO

The princely classical drama, which had dethroned, if not altogether ousted, the *Sacra Rappresentazione* in popularity, did not maintain its position; and the theatre underwent a new transformation towards the middle of the sixteenth century, caused by a new moral convulsion. But this convulsion was very different from that which had brought about the victory of Humanism. That had been a normal happening, an epoch in the evolution of the Italian spirit, when it came into its own and freed itself from the domination of the Church—or tried to. The crisis which led, about

[1] We know that the Interludes at Florence in 1589 were the point of departure of a movement which led, some years later, to the first attempts at opera recitative by Peri, Caccini, and Cavaliere. (See the present writer's *Histoire de l'opéra en Europe avant Lully et Scarlatti*, 1895.) In Signor Solerti's essay, *Precedenti dèl melodramma*, may be found a curious account of the interludes played at Milan, in 1599, between the acts of a play called *Armenia*, by G. B. Visconti. They represented the Tragedy of Orpheus, the Expedition of the Argonauts, Jason and the Golden Fleece, the Dispute between Pallas and Neptune, and the Triumph of Pallas. They were of unprecedented magnificence.

1540, to a new trimming of the theatrical sails was the unlooked-for result of an accumulation of political and social misfortunes. In 1527, Rome was taken and sacked by the sacrilegious followers of Charles V. In 1530, Florence was, in its turn, conquered, humiliated, and crippled; and the two heads of Italy were put in bondage. The Renaissance had received its death-blow; it was never to rise again; and servitude, a gilded servitude, lay heavily upon it. The Spanish tyranny, the Church, sought to repair the injury it had suffered, to regain its power over the world, and to establish, by any means possible, discipline and obedience in its flock. The little princes, the petty tyrants who gravitated in the orbit of this strong despotism, were inspired by its principles, and applied themselves to the subjugation of the Italian mind, the free spirit of the Renaissance.[1] The Leonardos and

[1] M. Vincent d'Indy (*Cours de Composition musicale*, 1902) has seen in the decadence of the art of the Renaissance the fruit of the spirit of self-love and free-thinking. But I think he is wrong. It was the great Renaissance of the fifteenth century that was a time of independent thought and desire for liberty. Let us recollect the strong movement towards science, which carried away Italian artists from the time of Brunelleschi and Alberti; and that faith in science, which found so glowing and lofty an expression in Leonardo; and elsewhere, the anti-clerical movement, which I mentioned before in connection with Humanism, and which even popes like Leo X supported. All this movement went forward until about the time of the sack of Rome. Soon afterwards Italy began to fall under the power and thought of Catholicism; and the second half of the sixteenth century is a long way from being a period of free-thought. One of the most striking types of this time is Tasso, an unfortunate man who strangely mingled his pleasures with his piety, who tortured himself with religious terrors, and who went to the extent of believing himself damned, and of going to

Raphaels were dead. The survivors of this great generation, the Michelangelos, after having striven desperately for their country's defence, found themselves denounced—by whom? By one calling himself Aretin. This master singer and pornographer threatened to deliver up the austere and godly Michelangelo, for "the impiety and indecency" of his *Last Judgment*. The nude offended the modesty of Aretin. Like Tartuffe, Aretin

the Inquisitors at Ferrara, Bologna, and Rome, in order to denounce himself and others, and to ask for punishment.

"I could often hear the terrible sound of the trumpets of the Last Judgment; and I saw Thee, O Lord, seated on a cloud, and heard Thee say (O awful words!): 'Go, ye accursed, into everlasting fire!' And this thought assailed me with so much force that I was obliged to make it known to those about me. Overcome with terror, I used to make my confession; and if by chance I thought I had forgotten some small sin, through carelessness or shame, I began my confession all over again, and sometimes made a general confession. . . . But this brought no peace to me, because I could not speak of my sins with as much force as I felt them. . . ."

Who is speaking like this? A Puritan from England? A Bunyan? One of Cromwell's soldiers? No; it was the prince of artists at the end of the Italian Renaissance, the undisputed master of poetry, of drama, and, as we shall see, of music as well—of all art, in fact, at the end of the sixteenth century. Is this the redoubtable "anti-Christian pride" which M. d'Indy speaks of as characteristic of the decadence of art? Is it not rather the fall of that pride? The free spirit of the Renaissance was broken about 1530. The Catholic counter-reform then dominated the Italian soul. The musicians at the end of the sixteenth and seventeenth century were nearly all of a religious spirit, and often religious in dress as well. Monteverde, Vecchi, Banchieri, Vitali, Stefano Landi, Carissimi, Stefani, and Cesti, were, or became, servants of the Church. The most popular characters at the end of the Renaissance had religious visions, even the extravagant Benvenuto Cellini himself, who saw the Virgin face to face. The mystic Michelangelo did not seem to be religious enough to the critics of his time. (For an account of the religious spirit of Italian artists in the sixteenth century see Müntz's *Histoire de l'Art pendant la Renaissance*, III, 33–39.)

declared that " as a man who had been baptized, he blushed at such licence." " Unbelief would be less culpable," he said, " than the outrage of the beliefs of others in such a manner."[1] Elsewhere, he announces that " the licentiousness of Michelangelo's art might aggravate the horror of Lutheranism." This last was a dangerous charge, and one likely to be listened to. If Michelangelo ran the risk of being accused of impiety and licentiousness, judge what liberty was allowed to others! Veronese was arraigned before the Inquisition. Painting itself was suspect. And what of the theatre? It was commanded to be silent; and silent it was. The theatre was muzzled, and so, by a consequence both natural and curious, music profited.

The popular *Sacre Rappresentazioni* had fallen into discredit; and nothing of a dramatic nature was now produced, unless it were exclusive plays in private rooms for invited guests only. Presently the *Commedia* itself was looked upon as dangerous; because the thought of the best people, if not that of the crowd, had too much liberty of expression there. A beginning was then made to overwhelm the text by the opulence of the setting; and the art of doing this developed under Bronzino, Giovanni da Bologna, Salviati, Ammanato, and Taddeo Zucchero, and reached its zenith towards the end of the sixteenth century at Florence with Bernardo Buontalenti. Yet in spite of its shackles, the Italian spirit still found a means of escape.

[1] Letter to Michelangelo, November 1545.

The princes now mistrusted comedy, and favoured that most soothing form of classic drama—the *Dramma pastorale.* This was the third stage in the dramatic evolution of opera. Everything had been leading up to this pastoral drama. It had been germinating both in the neo-classic theatre and in the Italian spirit. The dramatic eclogues of the fifteenth century, such as the *Arcadia* of Jacopo Sannazaro of Naples, foretold its arrival. And in the reorganization of the classic theatre, the pastoral tendency had always been an original characteristic of Italian genius. The first act of Politian's *Orfeo* had already been called "pastoral." But the date generally adopted for the definite advent of the pastoral drama is 1554, when Agostino Beccari's *Sacrificio* was produced at Ferrara, before Duke Ercole II, with music by Alfonso della Viola. That music has been preserved for us,[1] and Signor Solerti published it for the first time in his *Precedenti del melodramma.* A scene from the third act for solo and chorus of four voices is given, and the *canzone* for four voices that concludes the piece. The solo part (that of a priest) was sung by Andrea, the brother of Alfonso della Viola, who accompanied himself on the lyre. It is one of the earliest attempts known of the monodic style. The solo is repeated three times without change in three successive strophes, while the choral responses are different each time.

[1] The manuscript of Beccari's *Sacrificio* was discovered by Signor Arnaldo Bonaventura in the Palatina at Florence. It consists of twelve pages of manuscript music.

Beccari's *Sacrificio* was followed at Ferrara by Alberto Lollio's *Aretusa* (1563) and Agostino Argenti's *Sfortunato* (1567), for which Alfonso della Viola also wrote music. Torquato Tasso was present at the production of *Sfortunato*. Let us note once more the importance of Ferrara in the history of the theatre ;[1] and let us remember the name of Tasso, who played one of the prominent parts—if not the most prominent part of all—in securing the position of the pastoral in Italy, in bringing it to great popularity, and in helping to transform it into opera. In 1573, Tasso, now twenty-nine years old, wrote his famous *Aminta*, which was played on July 31 on the little island of Belvedere in the middle of the Po, near Ferrara ; and between 1581 and 1590 his friend, the chevalier Battista Guarini of Ferrara, secretary and ambassador to the duke, composed his *Pastor Fido*, a lyric tragi-comedy.

These two works had an immense success, and were followed by a host of imitations. The rest of the dramatic world was swamped ; and in 1598, Angelo Ingegneri, who was the principal writer about drama in the second half of the sixteenth century, said :

> " If there were no pastorals, one might almost say that the use of the theatre was gone, and that dramatic poetry was at an end. Comedies, however pleasing they may be, are no longer liked, unless they have splendid interludes and

[1] See Angelo Solerti's *Ferrara e la corte Estense nella seconda metà del secolo* XVI, 1899.

an extravagant setting. The tragedies are melancholy spectacles, or unsuited to representation; and some people look upon them as of bad omen, and spend their time or money upon them very unwillingly. . . . So the pastorals remain, which though they may have a certain comic foolishness about them, yet are not incapable of an almost tragic seriousness; and, while allowing ladies and modest young girls to be present (which is not the case with comedy), yet lend themselves to noble sentiments, which would not ill become tragedy itself. They are, in short, intermediate between tragedy and comedy, and give great delight, although without choruses or interludes."[1]

Ingegneri made a lengthy study of the part that music ought to take in these plays. His counsels are of a practical character, as is nearly always the case with Italian theorists. He suggests that the music especially should be adapted to the theatre, so that it is neither too noisy nor too muffled. "The orchestra and voices," he says, "should be put *behind the stage*, in a place chosen with great care, so that the sounds should blend and reach all parts of the room. The words should be clearly heard; and in choruses combined with action, the style should be simple and differ very little from ordinary speech. Interludes," he continues, "afford matter for a richer and more complex art; but it

[1] Angelo Ingegneri, *Della poesia rappresentativa e del modo di rappresentare le favole sceniche*, 1598, Ferrara.

must not be forgotten that music should be a rest and not a fatigue."

The light metre of the pastoral, in lines of seven or eleven syllables, was well suited to songs; and in the seventeenth century G. B. Doni himself, the champion of the new opera, recognized that no kind of dramatic action was better suited to song than that of the pastoral, which demands soothing and harmonious melodies—*soave e proporzionata melodia.*

. . . . . .

The pastoral faithfully expressed the soul of its epoch: no force of passion was there, no grandeur of thought, no liberty, and no vigorous sincerity. Instead, we find a mundane life, a learned sensibility, a subtle voluptuousness, refined dreams, and musical feeling.

In truth, music at that time had invaded the whole Italian spirit. Painters, writers, and distinguished people, especially in Northern Italy, at Venice, Ferrara, and Mantua, all gave themselves up to it in a kind of ecstasy. Nearly all the great Venetian painters of the sixteenth century—Giorgione, Pordenone, Bassano, Tintoretto, Giovanni da Udine, and Sebastiano del Piombo—were musicians. Do you remember their pictures of concerts?—divine ones by Bellini, and secular ones by Giorgione, Bonifazio, and Veronese? Do you recollect the *Wedding at Cana* in the Louvre, where Titian plays the double-bass, Veronese and Tintoretto the violoncello, and Bassano the flute?

Sebastiano del Piombo was celebrated as a singer and performer on the lute ; and Vasari was more willing to recognize Tintoretto's talents as a musician than as a painter. One may see by Aretino's letters the kind of place that music held in the society of that time, and Titian's relations with the musicians. At the court of Leo X, music dominated the other arts. The pope honoured two musical virtuosi almost as much as he did Raphael for his superintendence of the work at St. Peter's. A player on the lute, one Giammaria, a Jew, received the title of count, and a mansion. A singer, Gabriele Merino, became archbishop of Bari. And lastly it may be remembered that when Leonardo da Vinci presented himself at the court of Ludovico il Moro at Milan, it was—if we are to believe Vasari—not in the rôle of painter, but of musician. "The duke delighted in his playing on the lyre. Leonardo then brought him a lute, which he had made himself, fashioned almost entirely of silver and in the shape of a horse's head. He sang divinely with that instrument, improvising both the verses and the music."

Thus for half a century music engrossed the Italian painters, that is to say, the finest representatives of the Italian Renaissance. And where music enters she leaves a deep impression ; and without it being perceived, she transformed the spirit of art. I quoted not long ago Michelangelo's words : "Good painting is music, a melody." They are striking words, for they show painting offering homage to music.

The same phenomenon appears in poetry. When some one said to Girolamo Parabosco, the writer (I quote from Aretino), " Your tragedy of *Progne* is a fine composition," he replied, " I am a musician, and not a poet."[1] And he spoke truly. The age of the pastoral is the reign of poet-musicians ; and the musical theatre was elaborated by their spirit, and by the spirit of their public, twenty or thirty years before its form was decisively checked by Peri and E. de' Cavalieri.

The cleverest of these poet-musicians was Tasso ; and no one represents better than he the mental revolution at the end of the Renaissance. At that same town of Ferrara, where Ariosto died in 1532, Torquato Tasso settled in 1565. What a difference between the two poets ! Ariosto was gay and smiling, and in a world of action and a difficult life kept a noble and serene spirit, where, as Carducci finely says, " the sun never set " ; in his soul a classic artist, a deep thinker, and gifted with plastic feeling that was as fine as that of the great painters of his time. But Tasso was intense, troubled, and exalted by an emotion both sincere and literary, tortured by sorrow and joy and imaginary terrors, restless as though he had lived in our own day, writing ethereal and unquiet poems, a musician by

[1] Girolamo Parabosco of Placentia (who died in 1560) was, in fact, both poet and musician. He wrote comedies after the style of Aretino, stories after the manner of Bandello, and mythological poems. He was organist of St. Mark's at Venice as well, and was director of an academy of singing and music at the house of Domenico Veniero, and composed music for his own madrigals. He was a pupil of Willaert. (See the monograph of d'Ad. van Bever.)

nature and education, a musician with all his being and in all his work :

> " *In queste voci languide risuona*
> *Un non so che di flebile e soave,*
> *Che gli occhi a lacrimare invoglia. . . .*" [1]

These lines of the dying Clorinda seem to express the character of Tasso's music and poetry alike. His language is music itself. *Aminta* sings melodiously to both ear and heart, like one of Mozart's operas. They are true lyrical couplets with a ritornello ; they invoke music ; and in fact they were put to music, as were many of Tasso's other poems.[2]

Tasso loved music, and it held a large place in his life. His first love—at least the first we know of—was Lucrezia Bendidio of Ferrara. He was stirred by the young girl's singing ; and tells us of it in a graceful sonnet, written in 1561 : " *Su l'ampia fronte il crespo oro lucente. . . .*" [3]

He said he had shut his eyes to escape the dangers of love ; but he did not suspect the worst of them :

> " *Ma de l'altro periglio non m'accorsi,*
> *Che mi fu per l'orrecchie il cor ferito,*
> *E i detti andaro ove non giunse il volto.*" [4]

Later on, in 1566, the first verses that he wrote in honour of Leonora d'Este were again inspired by

[1] In these languid words is a sweet and plaintive sound, bringing tears to the eyes.

[2] *Aminta* was produced in Florence, in 1590, with music.

[3] On the broad brow the shining curls of gold. . . .

[4] But of the other danger I took no heed. Through my ear a blow was struck at my heart, and words reached me where looks could not.

music. It was a sonnet to Leonora, composed at a time when he had been forbidden to sing because she was ill.

Thus music is associated with his thoughts of love ; and those are thoughts one does not forget.

Many of his friends were musicians, and among them Cesare Pavesi and Scipione Gonzaga. And the princes to whose court he was attached—the duke of Urbino, Guidobaldo II, and the duke of Ferrara, Alphonso II—were enthusiastic musicians. He met many of the great composers of his time. At Rome, in the house of the cardinal Ercole II of d'Este, in 1571, he became acquainted with Palestrina and Luca Marenzio. He was also an intimate friend of Carlo Gesualdo, prince of Venosa, who had so strong an influence on madrigal music at the end of the sixteenth century, and who introduced more dramatic feeling into it than any one else.

Don Carlo Gesualdo belonged to the noblest family in Naples, with his cousins, the Davalos (the Pescara). His life held a terrible tragedy. He had married his cousin, Donna Maria Davalos ; and one night he surprised her in his palace, *flagrante delicto*, with her lover Don Fabrizio Carrafa, the duke of Andria. He killed them both (October 27, 1590). This drama agitated the whole of Naples, and gave rise to much narrative verse and many ballads. Tasso, who knew Don Gesualdo, and who had written several poems [1] in his honour and in honour of Donna Maria, was particularly affected by the news, which he learnt at Rome ; and it

[1] Three sonnets and a *canzone*.

inspired him to write some sonnets and a madrigal. About a year later he came to Naples (February to April 1592), and was attracted to the hero of this drama. Don Gesualdo had started an Academy in his own house with the idea of encouraging a taste for music and improving musical composition. Composers, singers, and instrumentalists all gathered there; and with them came Tasso. He was asked to write verses which might be set to music; and he produced thirty-six madrigals, some of them former compositions and some of them expressly composed for Don Gesualdo's academy. Eight of the madrigals have been preserved, and two sonnets, with music by the prince of Venosa.[1]

Now we know Tasso's ideas about music, for he has expounded them in his *Dialoghi*.[2] Like Ronsard —whom he may have known in France at the time of his visit to Paris in 1570–71—like Baïf and the Pleiad, he believed in the necessity of the union of poetry and music. He even gave music the better part; for Ronsard said that "music was the younger sister of poetry," while Tasso said that "Music is the sweetness and almost the soul of poetry" (*La musica è la dolcezza e quasi l'anima de la poesia*). Nor did he stop there. He complained that music had lost its power of expression, and that in its degeneration it had taken on too sensual a character, and was unconcerned with great

[1] The prince of Venosa was remarried in 1594 to Leonora d'Este, and Tasso again celebrated this event by a play in *ottava*.

[2] *Dialoghi*, published by A. Solerti, III, pp. 111–118. *La cavaletta overo de la poesia toscana.*

emotions ("*è divenuta molle ed effeminata . . .*"); and he wished that some good master would bring it back to its former "*gravità.*" This master he found in Don Gesualdo. The peculiar talent of the prince of Venosa was just that very ability to restore the "*massima gravità*" to the madrigal which Tasso demanded, and an ability to fashion music in song so that it interpreted the great tragic emotions. Thus it is most likely that Tasso, by his ideas about music and by his collaboration with Don Gesualdo, had a great influence on musico-dramatic style.

Then again, we find Tasso in personal relationship with all the future creators of Florentine opera Before 1586 he had addressed a sonnet to Laura Guidiccioni of Lucca,[1] who collaborated with Emilio de' Cavalieri and helped him with his first attempts at *melodramma* (opera). In 1590, he met Emilio de' Cavalieri at the house of Ferdinand, the grand duke of Tuscany. Then Ottavio Rinuccini came to visit him; and indeed all the most illustrious men of letters and art came to do him homage. *Aminta* was produced with music; Bernardo Buontalenti[2] furnished the decorations and scenic machinery, and E. de' Cavalieri and Laura Guidic-

[1] See Angelo Solerti, *Laura Guidiccioni Lucchesini ed Emilio de' Cavalieri*, 1902.

[2] Bernardo Buontalenti was born in 1537, and was for sixty years general architect to the grand dukes of Tuscany. He built their palaces, their towns, and their fortresses; he designed their gardens, directed their fêtes, and manufactured their scenic machinery and fireworks for their shows. The machinery which he invented for the theatre that was constructed at Uffizi in 1585 was celebrated all over Europe.

cioni were the organizers of the production; and we note that immediately after this they gave at the court a representation of *Satiro* and *Disperazione di Fileno* (1590), which are the first known examples of opera. These two pieces were very probably written in a "recitative style," as it was then called, and certainly with very expressive music.[1] Lastly, in 1592, at the house of Cinzio Passeri, a nephew of Clement VIII, who was president of an academy at Rome, Tasso met Luca Marenzio, "the most graceful swan" of Italian music, who, like Venosa, set many of his works to music. One may be allowed to think that the inventors of opera recognized Tasso's genius and profited by his ideas on poetry and music, and their union in drama.

Indeed, Rinuccini, who was the first boldly to adapt pastoral drama to the musical stage and the first to write real operatic *libretti*, was one of Tasso's disciples.[2]

Opera forthwith seized upon Tasso's subjects and characters. That genius, Monteverde, composed music for the interludes in *Aminta*, played at Parma in 1628; and he wrote the *Combat of Tancred and Clorinda* (1624) and the scene from *Armida and*

[1] Cavalieri wished that "*questa sorte di musica rinnovata da lui commova a diversi affetti, come a pietà ed a giubilo, a pianto ed a riso*" (that that sort of music, revived by him in the classic style, would stir up divers passions, such as pity and joy, tears and laughter).

[2] Signor Solerti, in his *Rinuccini* (1902), has found *canzoni* by Rinuccini which are modelled on Tasso's poems. (See also Guido Mazzoni's *Cenni su O. Rinuccini poeta*, 1895.) Rinuccini was the author of the poems of *Dafne* in 1594–7, and of Peri's *Euridice* (1600), as well as Monteverde's *Ariana* (1608).

Reynold (1627), which preceded the immortal *Armide* of Lully and Gluck.[1] Armida is a perfect type of operatic heroine—voluptuous and violent, caressing, hot-tempered, contradictory, and devoured by passion. . . .

> *" Qual raggio in onda, le scintilla un riso*
> *Negli umidi occhi tremulo e lascivo. . . ."*[2]

An unforgettable figure, who, under various names, has held sway in opera down to the Isolde of our own time.

Tasso's personality, so thoroughly modern, has left its mark on all art. The nature of his imagination has imposed itself on painting and plastic art as well as on poetry. But nothing shows his influence more clearly than pastoral opera, which took shape at Florence under his own eyes, and, in a way, under his patronage, and which his disciple Rinuccini brought to a triumphant issue.

. . . . . .

We have now reached 1590, the date of the production of *Aminta* at Florence, and of Cavalieri's first attempts at " melodrama." At this time pastoral opera was emerging from the pastoral

[1] At the same time as Monteverde, Michelangelo Rossi wrote an *Erminia sul Giordano* (1637) ; and Domenico Mazzocchi wrote an *Olindo e Sofronia* (1637). In France, since 1617, Mauduit and Guesdron had been directing at court the famous ballet, *La Délivrance de Renaud*, in which there is an air that has already some of the energy and tragic breadth of Lully's declamation. The subject of Armida, between 1637 and 1820, inspired more than thirty operas.

[2] Like the flash of light in a billow, the wanton quiver of her laugh plays in her liquid glance.

with music ; and it is difficult to say if *Aminta* has become an opera or if Cavalieri's *Satiro* is still a pastoral. We have wished to sketch the extent of dramatic evolution up to this transition period, for immediately after it came the famous works of Peri and Caccini, which were to inaugurate in so startling a manner the history of opera—a history we shall try to narrate elsewhere.

Let us give a backward glance over the last two centuries. We now see that opera evolved from the sixteenth-century pastoral, which in itself was the outgrowth, or the decadence, of the classic comedy and the *Sacra Rappresentazione* of the fifteenth century. Between these different styles of work there was no sudden interruption, and the one passed to the other quite insensibly. The *Orfeo* of Politian served as a transition between the *Sacra Rappresentazione* and the classic *Commedia,* as Tasso's *Aminta* came between the pastoral and the opera.

And this history of four musico-dramatic forms, which followed one another and were rivals, is something besides a history of art, for it is bound up with political and moral history as well. Political and moral causes, quite as much as artistic causes, led gradually to the passing of the *Sacra Rappresentazione* into classic comedy, from the latter into the pastoral, and from the pastoral into the opera. Evolution went on, step by step, through two centuries of drama—I will not say so much by development as by transformation, and, frankly speaking, by the weakening of the Italian spirit and the down-

fall of the Renaissance. This artistic progress was also—let us own it—a moral decadence. It was natural that it should be so, since this succession of dramatic forms reflects the whole life of the Renaissance, its youth and its decline, growing always in artistic virtuosity, as it fell away in moral valour.

What of freshness and of force still remained to Italy we have seen by the riches which she still was able to distribute with pomp and prodigality in the form of the hybrid art to which she was reduced—that is, by opera, through which she conquered the world who had conquered her.

THE FIRST OPERA PLAYED IN PARIS: LUIGI ROSSI'S *ORFEO*

I

MAZARIN AND MUSIC

MAZARIN was a musician and a connoisseur of music; and by a happy chance he was caught in the "melodramatic" movement of Rome and Florence. As a child, he had been brought up by the fathers of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri, and he spent his first years in this cradle of religious musical drama. Then at seven years old he was sent to a Jesuit College at Rome. We are told that when his masters wished to celebrate the canonization of St. Ignatius and give a splendid representation of it, the chief part, that of the saint, was given to Mazarin, who had by this time left school.[1] All Rome was present on this occasion and Mazarin played his part with great success.[2] Thus he would take part in the famous *Apotheosis of St. Ignatius and St. Francis Xavier*, by Johann Hieronymus von Kapsberger, in 1622, which was a sort of triumph of a Jesuitical Julius Cæsar, with

[1] He wrote his thesis in 1618.

[2] Elfridio Benedetti, *Raccolta di diverse memorie per scrivere la vita del card. G. Mazarino Romano;* quoted by V. Cousin in *La Jeunesse de Mazarin*, 1865.

processions of nations, animals, and foreign curiosities.[1]

At college he became friendly with the Colonna ;[2] and from 1626 he was intimate with the Barberini, and was also a great friend of cardinal Antonio.[3] So he was likely to be familiar with the first experiments of the operatic theatre, which these two illustrious families patronized at Rome, under the pontificate of Urban VIII (1623–1644). In one of the most violent pamphlets written against Mazarin during the Fronde, the *Lettre d'un religieux au prince de Condé*,[4] the author went so far as to pretend that through the agency of a singer at the theatre, a shameless woman whom he had seduced in Rome, he had insinuated himself into the good graces of cardinal Antonio. It was nothing but a malicious libel, but it shows that Mazarin, like many other prelates, frequently visited the opera and the singers.

[1] Signor Ademollo notes that in the first half of the seventeenth century in Italy, it was usual for an actor to be a musician as well, and capable of singing even the principal part of a *melodramma*. The same rule must have applied to private performances and school plays.

[2] He was brought up with the children of Colonna, the high constable, and between 1619 and 1622 accompanied don Jerome Colonna in Spain.

[3] The letters of the nuncio Sacchetti, quoted by Cousin, show that in 1629 Mazarin was already esteemed by pope Urban VIII and cardinal Francesco Barberini, the secretary of state. The same year he was attached to the legation of cardinal Antonio at Bologna as a captain of infantry.

[4] *Lettre d'un religieux envoyée à Mgr. le prince de Condé à Saint-Germain-en-Laye, contenant la vérité de la vie et des mœurs du cardinal Mazarin* (Cimber et Danjou, 2nd series). Without doubt the " religieux " was the vicar of St. Roch.

He was in the French embassy at Rome, in 1639,[1] when a musical drama, dedicated to cardinal Richelieu, was played. This was *Il favorito del principe*, the librettist of which was Ottaviano Castelli.

In April 1639 Mazarin became a naturalized Frenchman. Richelieu died on December 3, 1642, and Louis XIII on May 14, 1643. As early as November 28, 1643, Teodoro Ameyden notes, in his *Avis de Rome*, cardinal Mazarin's order to send musicians from Rome to France, in particular from the Papal chapel, for a comedy or a musical drama. And in the following February an order was sent from the cardinal to the French ambassador at Rome, telling him to send Leonora, the singer, to Paris, and to give her a thousand pistoles (*doppie*) for the journey, and as much for a yearly allowance.

It was this famous Leonora Baroni that Maugars heard sing, and extolled as "the wonder of the world, who made me forget my mortal state, so that I thought I was already among the angels, sharing the joys of the blessed."[2] It was the same Leonora

[1] But not as ambassador, as Ademollo seems to think in his book, *Les Théâtres de Rome au XVII^e siècle*. In 1639 the French ambassador at Rome was Marshal d'Estrées; and Mazarin was in Rome, too, persecuted by the Spanish party; but he was helped by Richelieu, who sent his favourite violinist, Maugars, to Rome that same year to write a report on the state of music in Italy.

[2] Maugars, *Response faite à un curieux sur le sentiment de la musique d'Italie, escrite à Rome le premier octobre 1639* (published by Thoinan, 1865).

Leonora played the theorbo and the viol; and Maugars heard her sing with her sister Caterina and her mother, "the beautiful Adriana"—the former playing the lyre and the latter the harp. Of Leonora, he says: "She has excellent judgment

who was loved and hymned by Milton ;[1] loved and praised by Pope Clement IX, who called her a sweet siren—*dolce sirena*—and spoke of her glowing eyes ;[2] loved and extolled by all the Italian poets of that time, who published a book in her honour.[3]

It would seem that Mazarin, too, was not insensible to her seductive charms—to that very beauty, perhaps, which Maugars denies. It is without doubt to her that the *religieux* makes allusion, and this seems the more likely when we think of the haste with which Mazarin had Leonora brought to Paris, establishing her with one of his friends in a house adjoining his own, where she was waited upon by the servants of the cardinal's

and knows good music from bad. She can listen intelligently, and even composes herself. In her singing she perfectly expresses the meaning of the words. She does not pride herself on being beautiful, but she is neither distasteful to the eye nor coquettish. She sings with restraint, with true modesty, and with a sweet seriousness. Her voice is of high compass, true, sonorous, and melodious, and she softens or increases the tone without any trouble and without making grimaces. Her transports and her sighs are never voluptuous, her glances are never indecorous, and her gestures have the seemliness of a virtuous girl. In passing from one note to another she sometimes makes one feel intervals of an enharmonic and chromatic kind with skill and charm."

[1] Milton, who was present in 1639 at the Barberini productions in Rome, dedicated a piece of Latin verse to Leonora, in which he compares her with Tasso's Leonora :

" Ad Leonoram Romae canentem
Altera Torquatum cepit Leonora poetam
cujus ab insano cessit amore furens.
Ah ! miser ille tuo quanto felicius aevo
perditus, et propter te, Leonora, foret ! "

[2] "*Vivi e lumi ardenti scoccan dal vago ciglio amabil pena . .*" (1639).

[3] *Applausi poetici alle glorie della signora Leonora Baroni* (1639–1641).

household.[1] Elsewhere she was accompanied by her husband, Giulio Cesare Castellani, and in her demeanour was dignified and discreet. She was born at Mantua in December 1611, and was at this time thirty-three years old. She was not an operatic singer, but a *virtuosa di musiça da camera.* Her singing was such that at first her audience felt some astonishment, or even displeasure. "One began by thinking that her voice was better suited to the theatre, or the church, than to *salons*, and that her Italian method was vocally rather hard." But her critics were suddenly abashed when the queen declared that no one could sing better. The abbé Scaglia wrote: "I cannot explain the endearments which the queen showered upon her, except by saying that they were proportionate to the estimation in which she holds people who have the cardinal's approval." She accorded her access to her own apartments at any hour, and gave her money and jewels—"ten thousand francs to dress herself in the French style, a collar of pearls, earrings, and several thousand crowns' worth of jewels, and a warrant for an allowance of a thousand crowns. Mme de Motteville tells us that she followed the court, in 1644, to the house of the

[1] Letter from the abbé Scaglia to Madame Royale Christine de France, regent of Savoy, March 10, 1645 (Quoted by Ademollo). Compare the following from *Mémoires anonymes*, attributed to the comte de Bregy: "Shortly after his establishment in the ministry, cardinal Mazarin had a musician brought from Rome, who was said to have one of the finest voices in Italy. He lodged her with my father, and she was called signora Leonora. She told me such splendid things about her own country that I had a great longing to make a journey to Rome."

duchesse d'Aiguillon, at Rueil, where the queen went to take refuge from the hot weather. She often sang and improvised airs to Voiture's verses. But she only stayed one year in France, and left for Paris on April 10, 1645.[1]

Other Italian musicians came with Leonora, or were not long in following the court to France.[2] In November 1644 came the wonderful Atto Melani—a treble singer, a composer, impresario, and secret agent.[3] Mazarin's musical dilettantism did not distract him from politics; and he knew perfectly how to get music and musicians into his employ. In February 1644, in connection with the arrival of Leonora, the *Journal d'Ameyden* remarks

[1] Letter from the abbé Scaglia to Madame Royale Christine de France, April 14, 1645. Ademollo says that she did not return to France; and that she stayed in Rome, where she acquired great influence in political and ecclesiastical circles. It is curious that people continued to speak of her in France, as if she had stayed in Paris a much longer time. It would seem to be a proof of the impression she made there.

[2] The abbé Scaglia mentions, in the same letter, the composer Marco Marazzoli dell' Arpa.

[3] Born in March 1626 at Pistoia; the son of a bell-ringer at the principal church there. He was nineteen years old when he came to Paris. In July 1647 he went to Florence, but returned almost immediately. In 1648 and 1649 he was Mazarin's secret agent. He left again for Italy in September 1649, and this time he stayed there until 1654. He became half French, and the Italians reproached him in very plain language: "*Come puo stare che un cappon canti da gallo?*" (How comes it that a capon plays the cock [Frenchman]?)—Lampoon on *Atto Melani castrato di Pistoja*, quoted by Ademollo. Later on he was in communication with the Gonzaga of Mantua. His correspondence with them has been published by Bertolotti in *La musica in Mantova*. In the course of his vagabond life we find him in 1654 at Innsbruck and Ratisbon; then at Ferrara and Florence; in 1655 at Rome; in 1656 at Florence; in 1657 again at Paris; in 1661 at Marseilles; in 1664 and 1665 at Florence; in 1667 at Dresden; and finally again at Florence.

the evident intention of the cardinal to keep the French occupied with amusements—*tenendoli occupati con allegria con che si guadagna gli animi di quella natione e della medesima Regina* (with pleasures, by which one wins over the minds of the nation, even that of the queen herself).

And here we may recall the severe accusations against music by the old musician Kuhnau, in his novel *The Musical Charlatan*:[1] "Music turns the thoughts from serious study. It is not without reason that politicians favour it—they do it for the sake of the State. It is a diversion for the people's thoughts; it stops them from prying into Government affairs. Italy is a case in point: her princes and her ministers have let the country be corrupted by music, so that it shall not inferfere with their plans."

One might think that some of these words had been written with one eye on Mazarin. This minister, whose motto was "Who has heart, has everything," knew the power of the drama and music too well not to use them as his agents. And if the national temperament of France was not musical enough to make his policy successful with the middle classes and parliamentarians,[2] on the other hand, it succeeded completely with the court, and especially with the queen, for whom it was intended. Leonora Baroni had charmed her by her singing. Atto Melani was soon all-powerful, and

[1] *Der Musicalische Quack-Salber*, Leipzic, 1700.

[2] As a matter of fact, its effect was the exact opposite of what Mazarin wanted.

she could hardly do without him. He was commanded to sing to her nearly every other day; and she was so enthusiastic about music that often for four hours on end nothing else was thought about. She loved melancholy airs above all, and the court naturally shared her taste.

So soon as Atto Melani, the compliant instrument of Mazarin, was installed and sure of royal favour, he made the first attempts at musical drama. In a letter of March 10, 1645, which he wrote to prince Mattias de' Medici, Atto makes allusion to a production of this kind—though he does not give its title—which was revived after Easter.[1] It was probably *La Finta Pazza*[2] (The Pretended Fool), the first performance of which, however, is generally put some months later, on December 14, 1645. I shall not dwell upon this work, which is not, properly speaking, an opera at all, but a play with

[1] One of Melani's brothers and a certain Checca of Florence sang in it.

[2] The music of *La Festa teatrale della Finta Pazza* was by Sacrati, and the poem by Giulio Strozzi. But the two principal authors were the machinist-decorator, Jacopo Torelli of Fano, an all-round man—mathematician, poet, painter, architect, and mechanician, who came to Paris towards the end of 1644—and G. Battista Balbi. Both were lent to Mazarin; the first by the duke of Parma, the second by the grand-duke of Tuscany. *La Finta Pazza* had already been produced in Venice in 1641; but it was now adapted to the tastes of Paris and the little king, who was seven years old. G. Strozzi was known in France; for one of his operas (*Proserpina rapita*) had been produced at the French embassy at Rome. The actors of *La Finta Pazza* in Paris were chiefly Italian players of Giuseppe Bianchi's company, which had come to Paris in 1639. A copy of the play may be found at the Bibliothèque Nationale, with plates by Valerio Spada, and a synopsis by Giulio Cesare Bianchi of Turin.

music and mechanical effects.[1] A quotation from the programme runs as follows :[2] "This scene will be quite without music, but is so well expressed that the absence of melody will hardly be noticed." The experiment did not altogether justify these words ; and as the piece was only performed before a few people—the king, the queen, the cardinal, and their familiars at court[3]—its success was not great. According to Mme de Motteville : "We were only twenty or thirty people, and we thought we should die of boredom and cold. . . ." After that Atto Melani left for Italy,[4] and the cause of Italian opera seemed to languish.

It was, however, doing nothing of the sort. Mazarin's enthusiasm revived, and he made a second attempt ; and this time a number of people came upon the scene, of whom musical history has taken no account, although they had a decided share in the foundation of opera in France. I refer to the arrival in Paris of the princes Barberini.

. . . . . .

[1] Father Menestrier says : "The singers, who had been brought from Italy, made the action of the play perfectly charming, with its many changes of scene and its mechanical effects. . . ."

[2] Quoted by Chouquet : *Histoire de la musique dramatique en France*, 1873.

[3] "Because the great company of courtiers were with Monsieur, who was giving a supper to the duc d'Enghien" (*Mémoires de Mme de Motteville*).

[4] Letter from Mazarin to prince Mattia de' Medici, May 10, 1645. La Checca soon followed him. (Letter from prince Léopold to prince Mattia, August 14, 1646.)

II

THE BARBERINI IN FRANCE

They were three nephews of pope Urban VIII. The eldest, cardinal Francesco, was secretary of state. The second, Don Taddeo, prince of Palestrina, prefect of Rome, general of the Church, was married in 1629 to Anna Colonna, the daughter of the high constable. The third, cardinal Antonio, Mazarin's friend, later grand almoner of France, bishop of Poitiers, archbishop of Rheims, was, for the time, protector of the French Crown at Rome, that is to say, he was entrusted with French interests near the holy see.

This family had been all-powerful at Rome from 1623 to 1644; and I have elsewhere[1] spoken of the part they played in the history of opera. Filippo Vitali, the author of *Aretusa* in 1620, was *virtuoso di camera* for cardinal Francesco. Stefano Landi, the two Mazzochi, the two Rossi, and Marco Marazzoli, wrote for them. *La Diana schernita* by Cornachioli (1629) and the musical dramas of Ottavio Tronsarelli (1629) were dedicated to Don Taddeo. The influence of the Barberini on dramatic music became more weighty after they had constructed a theatre in their palace at Rome, which held more than three thousand people. The first opera performed there was Stefano Landi's *San*

[1] *Histoire de l'Opéra en Europe avant Lully et Scarlatti*, 1895.

Alessio, in February 1632,[1] and it was dedicated to cardinal Francesco. Then followed in 1635, *La Vita di S. Teodora*, a poem by Mgr Ruspigliosi;[2] in 1637, *Il Falcone*[3] and *Erminia sul Giordano*, by Michelangelo Rossi, dedicated to D. Anna Colonna Barberina; in 1639, *Chi sofre speri*, a poem by Mgr Ruspigliosi, with music by Vergilio Mazzocchi and Marco Marazzoli, the famous production at which Milton was present; and lastly, in the same year, one of the masterpieces of Italian lyric tragedy, *Galatea*, dedicated to cardinal Antonio,[4] with words and music by the celebrated Loreto Vittori. All these productions had a considerable reputation outside Italy; and Mazarin's librarian and confidant, Gabriel Naudé, did not hide the fact that the musical plays that the cardinal wished to give in France were in imitation of them.[5]

[1] Not in 1634, as has been said up to now; for we have evidence in the curious account of it by a Frenchman who was present in 1632. This manuscript, *Le Journal de J.–J. Bouchard*, is in the library of the École des Beaux-Arts at Paris; and from it I have published the picturesque account of the carnival and shows at Rome in the *Revue d'histoire et de critique musicales* (January and February 1902) under the title of *La première représentation du S. Alessio de Stefano Landi*.

[2] Mgr Ruspigliosi became pope in 1667, under the name of Clement IX.

[3] This piece is probably the same as *Chi sofre speri*.

[4] It will be remembered that Mazarin was at Rome in the year 1639, when the Barberini productions were especially sumptuous.

[5] "And because all those who had been at Rome went to the queen and loudly praised this manner of giving comedies in music, such as Messieurs les Barberinis had given to the people of Rome for the last five or six years, she wished, in an access of extraordinary goodness, to give the same pleasure to the Parisians." The above is taken from Gabriel Naudé's *Jugement de tout ce qui a esté imprimé contre le cardinal Mazarin*,

Circumstances singularly favoured this project. The pope Barberini died in 1644; and the political stupidity of his nephews brought to the pontificate cardinal Panfili (Innocent X), who was both their own and France's enemy. This resulted very soon in persecutions against all who had formed part of the preceding government. Innocent desired the Barberini to render an account of their financial exactions; and the Barberini, who had been engaged since 1640 in quarrels with the Italian princes, were obliged to shut their theatre.[1] The musicians and actors left Rome;[2] and the Barberini themselves departed from the place where their goods and lives were menaced. Cardinal Antonio escaped from the Pontifical States by sea, in order to avoid an action against him for embezzlement, and he arrived in France in October 1645.[3] Cardinal

depuis le sixième janvier jusques à la déclaration du premier avril mil six cens quarante-neuf, 1649. Naudé himself had been present at some of the Barberini productions, in particular that of *S. Alessio* in 1632.

[1] It was reopened again in 1653, the year the Barberini made peace with the Panfili. A poem by cardinal Ruspigliosi called *Dal Male il Bene*, with music by Marazzoli, was played on the occasion of the marriage of the prince of Palestrina with dona Olimpia Giustiniani. The very title of the work—"Out of Evil comes Good"—seems like an allusion to the better fortunes of the Barberini.

[2] Benedetto Ferrari and Manelli di Tivoli, with a company of Roman actors, had just founded the Opera at Venice.

[3] "Their goods were sequestrated and themselves were about to be thrown into prison in the château of Saint Angelo; and rumour ran that prison would not be the last act of the tragedy. They arrived at Cannes, not only in the character of fugitives, but of castaways. The masts and sails of their vessel had been carried away and the tiller lost, after a four days' storm, which had driven them round Sardinia and Corsica" (Despatches of the Venetian ambassador, Nani, February 6,

Francesco and don Taddeo followed his example, and after four days of tempest, which sent their ship astray round Sardinia and Corsica, they landed at Cannes, January 1646, in a state of utter destitution. Mazarin, who had quarrelled with them after the election of Innocent X, by now cherished no ill-feeling against them, and gave them handsome protection.[1] He went to meet cardinal Francesco, received him with affection, and installed him in his palace. Dona Anna Colonna, princess of Palestrina and wife of don Taddeo, arrived in her turn, and was received with friendliness by the queen.[2] And so the whole of the powerful house of Barberini were settled in Paris by the end of 1646; and they were in such friendly relationship with the court, that in November 1647 Mazarin thought of marrying one of his " Mazarinettes " to a Barberini.

It was in this very year that the Italian opera made its famous début in Paris, under the eyes of

1646. See *Histoire de France pendant la minorité de Louis XIV*; Cheruel; *Mémoires d'Omer Talon*; and *Recueil des instructions données aux ambassadeurs de France*, Hanotaux).

[1] In response to the papal bulls against the fugitive cardinals, the king forbade the Barberini to leave France, and commanded the governors of provinces to combat these bulls, if necessary. War was made upon the pope. Condé wished to take Avignon. Piombino and Porto Longone were seized in October 1646. The pope, at last being frightened, promised to pardon the Barberini and to restore their property to them (*Lettres de Mazarin*, II, 326). But he did not keep his word; and on June 24, 1647, the French ambassador at Rome, Fontenay-Mareuil, wrote: " The Barberini must not be mentioned." So they stayed in Paris, where don Taddeo died in 1647. As for cardinal Antonio, he became almost French, and was made grand almoner of France, bishop of Poitiers (1652), and archbishop of Rheims (1667).

[2] *Mémoires de Madame de Motteville*, pp. 195–6.

the Barberini. There was no doubt that they had a share in it; for that form of art was in part their own work, and their pride was concerned in its success; and we know what careful supervision the cardinals Francesco and Antonio gave to their productions at Rome.[1] The Italian singers and mechanicians were their friends; and though other princes before them had tried their hand at musical drama in Florence and Rome, the "Comedy of Machines," which was to become French Opera, was properly of Barberini origin.[2]

We see their hand in the production of *Orfeo*, given on March 2, 1647, at the Palais-Royal, and we have a proof of it. Of the two authors of *Orfeo*, the one was a poet, the abbé Francesco Buti of Rome, doctor-of-law and apostolic protonotary, who had come over with cardinal Antonio in 1645;[3] the other was the musician, Luigi Rossi, who was, in 1646, "*musico dell' Em. card. Ant. Barberino*,"[4] and who probably accompanied the latter in his exile to France.[5]

[1] See the *Journal de J.-J. Bouchard* (1632) and Milton's letter to Luca Holstenio, March 30, 1639. Cardinal Francesco used to explain the *S. Alessio* or the *Chi sofre speri* minutely to his guests; and cardinal Antonio kept order in the hall with a stick (Ademollo, *I teatri di Roma*).

[2] In the *Histoire de l'Opéra en Europe avant Lully et Scarlatti*, see the mechanical contrivances, the scene-shifting, the rain, hail, storms, battles, riding in the air, and moving scenery, employed in *Erminia* in 1637, and in *Chi sofre speri* in 1639.

[3] Ademollo: *I primi fasti della musica italiana a Parigi*.

[4] *Ariette di musica, a una e due voci di eccellentissimi autori*— in Bracciano, per Andrea Fei stampator ducale, 1646.

[5] Nuitter mentions elsewhere his presence in Paris before the arrival of the singers.

From that time on everything is clear. After the arrival of the Barberini and their poets and musicians, Mazarin appealed to Florence and Rome[1] to send him new actors; and on September 29, 1646, he requested the commissary of the Italian army to avail himself of the fleet's return to send the actors off to France. Atto Melani was recalled from Florence to supervise the production. He arrived in January 1647 "after a thirty-four days' journey"; and he wrote to his master, prince Mattia, to say they were rehearsing "a very fine comedy called *Orfeo*, with words by signor Buti and music by signor Luigi," and that "S. M. showed such a liking for this kind of play that they were getting another one ready to follow *Orfeo*."[2] A letter from Gobert to Huygens, written probably in February 1647, confirms this: "There are four men and eight *castrati*, brought over by M. le Cardinal. They are planning a comedy, which sieur Louygy has expressly composed for production at the carnival."[3]

. . . . .

[1] To the marquis Bentivoglio of Florence and to Elpidio Benedetti of Rome (*Lettres de Mazarin*, II, 815).

[2] January 12, 1647 (see Ademollo). This second play did not take place for reasons given later.

[3] *Correspondance de Huygens*, 1882, quoted by Nuitter and Thoinan. Other Italian prelates of the Barberini party interested themselves in these first attempts at Italian opera in France. If it is true, as Father Menestrier says it is, in February 1646 they also played in the episcopal hall at Carpentras a sort of French opera, *Achebar, roi du Mogol*. The poetry and music were written by the abbé Mailly, and one must note that it would be played with Mazarin's permission. The bishop of Carpentras was cardinal Alessandro Bicchi, Mazarin's most

III

LUIGI ROSSI BEFORE HIS ARRIVAL IN FRANCE

Who was this Luigi Rossi, once so celebrated, and now forgotten? One does not find his name in Dictionaries of Music; or else the information given about him is insignificant and inexact. Neither Mme de Motteville, nor Guy Joly, nor Goulas, nor Montglat, nor Lefèvre d'Ormesson, mention him in their notes about the new production at the Palais-Royal, though they were interested in it. Renaudot's *Gazette* does not even mention his name in the long official description of *Orfeo*. Father Menestrier follows his example. And so in a very short time no one remembered the author of *Orfeo*. Ludovic Celler (L. Leclerq) and Clément attribute the opera to Monteverde; Fournel to the abbé Perrin; Arteaga, Ivanovitch, and others, to Aurelio Aureli; Francesco Caffi and Hugo Riemann, in the 1887 edition of his dictionary, to Gius Zarlino of the sixteenth century, or to a musician who had taken his name; and Humbert, in the French translation of the same dictionary, published in 1899, to Peri.

And yet in France in the seventeenth century, the name of Luigi was representative of a whole epoch of Italian music, the most perfect music of

intimate friend among the Italian cardinals, and the surest upholder of France at Rome. Michel Mazarin was archbishop of Aix in 1645; and cardinal Mazarin himself had been twice vice-legate of Avignon. The whole district had therefore come strongly under his influence.

its time. Sébastien de Brossard, in his *Catalogue*[1] calls this period "the Middle Ages" (meaning the Middle Age—1640 to 1680 or 1690); and he gives Luigi the first place among Italian musicians. Lecerf de la Viéville de Fresneuse often speaks of him in his *Comparaison de la musique italienne et de la musique française*,[2] and sums up Italian music in his name, with that of Carissimi and Lully. Bacilly, who, after Lecerf, was one of the composers who did most to improve French song, can talk of only two musicians—Antoine Boësset and "the illustrious Luigi."[3] But these writers' information about Luigi would seem to come from Saint-Évremond, who had always a partiality for him (probably because Luigi reminded him of his youth at the French court, before his exile), and who speaks of him without hesitation as "the first man in the world in his art."[4] It is evident that Lecerf, especially, borrows all that he says about Luigi's relations with French musicians from Saint-Évremond.[5]

[1] Sébastien de Brossard, *Catalogue* (in manuscript) Bibl. Nat. Rés. Written in 1724.

[2] Brussels, 1705.

[3] *Remarques curieuses sur l'art de bien chanter et particulièrement pour ce qui regarde le chant françois*, 1679.

[4] *Observations sur le goût et le discernement des François*; and *Lettre sur les Opéra, à M. le duc de Buckingham.*

[5] There are also a few words about Luigi in a letter from Pietro della Valle to Lelio Guidiccioni on *la Superiorità della Musica dell' età nostra*; and he is mentioned in some French and Italian poems addressed to him by Margherita Costa, and by Dassoucy, the future musician of Corneille's *Andromède*. Perhaps Dassoucy had already met Rossi at Rome, which he had once visited. The story of Luigi Rossi's life has been lately revived through M. Henry Prunières' researches and in an essay

Luigi Rossi was born at Naples towards the end of the sixteenth century. He pursued his musical studies under the direction of a composer of Belgian origin, Jean de Macqué; and came to Rome with his brother, Carlo, who was a celebrated harp player. This Carlo Rossi has been confused, as M. Prunières shows us, with his namesake, Carlo de Rossi, who played the part of Maecenas at Rome, and gave the two brothers a friendly welcome.

There was at Rome, in the Barberini's time, a little Neapolitan colony of which Salvator Rosa was the soul. Carlo de Rossi was his most intimate friend, and at his death he had a monument raised to his name. Luigi also frequented the house in the Via del Babbuino, and met there the most famous men in Italy—Carissimi, Ferrari, Cesti, and, perhaps, Cavalli, who were all intimates of the house.[1] Salvator himself was a musician, and he composed music and was fond of collaborating with his musician friends.[2] Burney claims to have seen a book of airs and poetic cantatas that Rossi, Carissimi, and others, had set to music.

One may perhaps find a reflection of the thought of this musical circle in Salvator's satires. He violently attacked the corruption of artists, the infamous morals of singers and the infatuation of Roman society for that *canaglia* (rabble), and

by Signor Alberto Cametti, *Alcuni documenti inediti su la vita di L. R. Sammelbände der I. M. G.*, 1912.

[1] Lady Morgan, *Memoirs of the Life and Times of Salvator Rosa.*

[2] " Painting, poetry, and music," he said, " are inseparable."

especially the abasement of religious art and the mundane style of singing in the church—"misereres like chaconnes, and a style worthy of farce or comedy with its jigs and sarabands. . . ."[1] Carissimi fought against this style at the Collegium Germanicum, where he had taught since 1630; but as for Luigi, he specialized in mundane music; although, according to Lady Morgan, he wrote an *opera spirituale, Giuseppe figlio di Giacobbe,* whose title reminds one of Carissimi's *Sacred Stories* and religious cantatas, like the one on the *Stabat Mater.*[2] His *canzonette* had made him popular, and were admired by Pietro della Valle for their novelty of style. He probably played them himself; for Atto Melani praised his virtuosity in 1644, and he links his name with that of an Italian singer, who would be likely to be one of the chief actors in *Orfeo*—Marco Antonio Pasqualini. But Luigi's fame is chiefly associated with the *Cantate,* a musical form that had an immense success, which he himself helped to originate.

The history of the origin of the Cantata has not yet been written;[3] though it is one of the principal chapters in the history of seventeenth-century music. The cantata, or *scena di camera,* responded

[1] "*Cantan su la ciaccona il miserere*
e un stilo da farza e da commedia
e gighe e sarabande alla distesa. . . "

[2] There are also some *Spiritual Madrigals* by Luigi Rossi in the British Museum.

[3] M. Alfred Wotquenne, the eminent librarian of the Brussels Conservatoire, is at present gathering together materials for a proposed history of the Cantata.

to the needs of Italian musicians of that time—a need to dramatize even concert music. It was essentially dramatic chamber-music, and evolved quite naturally from the later sixteenth-century madrigals, which had sometimes the character of dramatic monologues. Since the first attempts of the Florentines, the creators of opera, the cantata little by little became separated from the madrigal by the introduction of solo songs into vocal pieces for several voices. The vogue of opera had its effect upon this form, by leading more and more to the development of the solo at the expense of the part-song, until the latter was nearly altogether eliminated. But the cantata had its revenge, by reacting in its turn upon opera.

Burney claims that the first person to use the word "cantata" was Benedetto Ferrari of Reggio in his *Musiche varie a voce sola* (1637), which contains a *cantata spirituale*. But the name was in existence before this, and may be found in a volume of airs by Francesco Manelli of Tivoli, called *Musiche varie a una due e tre voci, cioè Cantate, Arie, Canzonette, et Ciaccone*, etc. (1636).[1] Manelli was the musician from Rome who came to Venice with Benedetto Ferrari, and introduced opera there.[2] And so these two founders of opera at Venice seem

[1] This book was published in Venice at Gardano's, by Manelli's wife, who was called the "*cantatrice celeberrima.*"

[2] *Andromeda* (1637), the first Italian opera to be produced in a theatre open to the general public. There followed *La maga fulminata* (1638) and *Alcate* (1642). Professor Giuseppe Radiciotti has recently brought Francesco Manelli to light in his interesting essays on *Arte musicale in Tivoli* (Tivoli, 1907).

also to have been the founders of the cantata—that is, of concert-room opera.[1]

That patriarch of opera, Monteverde, was a forerunner here; for if he did not actually use the word "cantata," he at least wrote cantatas, scenes of dramatic music for the concert-room, such as his celebrated *Combat of Tancred and Clorinda*, published in the *Madrigali guerrieri ed amorosi* of 1638,[2] but sung in 1624, in the palace of Girolamo Mozzenigo at Venice "in the presence of all the nobility, who were so moved by them," says Monteverde himself, "that they shed tears." This was not Monteverde's only attempt in this form—a form in which his noble genius, with all its subtlety and refinement, pleases us perhaps even more than in its broader and less delicate form on the stage. We must also note that although he did not publish his opera *Arianna*, he published separately the *Lamento d'Arianna* with "*due lettere amorose in genere rappresentativo*" (Venice, 1623). And it is possible he took more pleasure in hearing certain of his dramatic scenes in the concert-room than in the theatre.

[1] It is to be noted that Manelli and Ferrari often composed the verses of their own songs; also that the two works of Manelli and Ferrari quoted before were dedicated to the English ambassador at Venice, the "viceconte Basilio Feilding, barone di Northam." The English had a predilection for this form of Italian cantata; and it is at Oxford that the finest collection of cantatas may be found, by such composers as Luigi Rossi, Carissimi, and Ferrari.

[2] The title adds: "*con alcuni opuscoli in genere rappresentativo, che saranno per brevi episodii frà i canti senza gesto*" (with some small works of a representative kind, which shall be, in brief episodes, [dramatic] songs without action).

Besides Monteverde, we find among the creators of dramatic scenes for the concert-room some of the most celebrated masters of the opera at Rome: such as the two brothers Mazzocchi—Vergilio and, especially, Domenico Mazzocchi, who set to music some scenes from Tasso and Virgil.[1]

In a general way it seems that cantatas were the particular creation of the Roman and Venetian masters of opera, with the exception perhaps of Cavalli, who was of too dramatic a turn of mind, and had too broad a style and too popular a talent to be attracted by this kind of music, which developed considerably after 1640, as the names of Carissimi[2] and Luigi Rossi show.

It was quite natural that the operatic musicians should seek to transport the new dramatic style to the concert-room; though nothing could have been more dangerous for their art. What were these concerts? They were exclusive gatherings of fashionable people in places little fitted for the sincere and untrammelled expression of feeling. For however frivolous a theatre audience may be,

[1] *Dialoghi e Sonetti posti in musica* (1638). The scenes included, *Dido furens, Olindo e Sofrania, Nisus et Euryalus, Maddalena errante.* Stefano Landi also published airs for a single voice, to be sung *con la spinetta* (Collections of 1620, 1627, and 1637). So also did Loreto Vittori, the author of *Galatea* (*Arie a voce sola*, 1649), often with music set to poems of his own.

[2] Giacomo Carissimi of Marino near Rome (1603–1674), organist at Tivoli from 1624 to 1627 (see the afore-mentioned book by Giuseppe Radiciotti), then choir-master at the Collegium Germanicum at Rome. He is celebrated only for his religious music. His first known airs for voice alone are secular cantatas, which appeared in 1646. He, also, was attracted by the opera; for in 1647, at Bologna, an opera of his was produced called *Le amorose passioni di Fileno.*

however occupied with parading its clothes, with criticizing others and flirting and gossiping, yet the underlying ideas and the action of an opera maintain some concern for truth and dramatic life. But works written for fashionable soirées and singers, fragments of operatic scenes performed in the midst of the chatter and petty intrigue of a *salon*, are bound to lose all serious feeling and to reflect nothing but the amiable banality which is part and parcel of the society of wits. Worse than that, an insipid kind of poetry flourishes in such society—a sort of correct and genteel idealism, without enthusiasm, without sincerity, having indeed in its heart some fear of truth, but as much connection with true idealism as the observance of religion has with the love of God.

This polite and well-brought-up idealism was the fount of inspiration for the musicians and poets of the cantata. Personality was effaced, and people contented themselves with an approach to truth, with a musico-dramatic convention, as false as that heard in *salon* recitations—which were as false as they could be, for they would have been out of place and in very bad taste if they had been sincere. On the other hand, a *salon* audience was a sound judge of beauty and form, of elegance of expression, of good taste, and of a certain temperate perfection.

And so the greater part of the cantatas, by gradually ridding themselves of all expressiveness, rapidly attained great plastic beauty. And a musician was able more easily to realize beauty in this particular form of art, since he was not hampered

by the tyranny of dramatic situations, and could balance his composition according to his taste. Thus the cantata developed a classic form very quickly.

At first this beauty and balance were not incompatible with liberty and dramatic sincerity. Take, for example, Luigi Rossi's fine cantata, *Gelosia*, written in 1646.[1] Here we are quite close to its model—opera; and as the cantata had not yet established itself completely, this one is timid and tentative in form. But the regularity of construction at which the cantata was aiming was doomed to harm its expression of feeling.[2] Certainly

[1] M. Gevaert has published this admirable air in his collection, *Les Gloires de l'Italie*. The cantata *Gelosia* appeared in *Ariette di musica a una e due voci di eccellentissimi autori* (1646). It consisted of three parts, each part being again subdivided into three and consisting of: a declaimed recitative in four time, a well-defined melody in three-four time, and a declaimed recitative in four time.

[2] And this was in the time of Carissimi, who, after Cavalli, admittedly contributed something to the harmonious but empty formalism of Opera. This great artist was rather cold, eminently intelligent (indeed, intellectual), clear-headed, methodical, and sensitive, but restrained and almost careful of his emotions, which shows him to be a long way from Monteverde's nervous tensity, or Cavalli's fiery transports. He was fitted to impress the France of the Great King by his rational genius. There was something of Guido Reni in him. His colouring is clear, but monotonous; his construction is fine, but often cold and symmetrical; his rhythms vary little; his declamation is natural and apposite, but carefully avoids all warmth of expression—all of which might become annoying with a commonplace text. His music is dominated by the all-powerful law of tonality, which makes itself felt throughout, and prevents him from straying into new lands of discovery, like Monteverde. This criticism may seem too severe to those who only know Carissimi by some of his *Histoires Sacrées;* but it must be remembered that the sad and thoughtful poet of *Jephté* and of *La Plainte des Damnez* was a man who composed a great number

people like Luigi Rossi and Carissimi were fine architects, and built airs of beautiful form—whole series of airs and recitatives and scenes of song. And they created a simple style, clear and methodical, and of incomparable elegance. But too often the fine phrases had a ready-made appearance; and, like elegant speech, they often said nothing at all. One must first learn to speak sincerely and to say exactly what one feels; for if style comes first, it confines thought in a prison; and so much the worse for those who find themselves at home in it! Such men are no longer fit for open air and liberty.

The victory of the cantata with its false ideals, in which outward form counted for more than inner feeling, was a victory of scenic songs independent of drama and action, and soon devoid of all sense—the victory of a *salon* fashion, definitely compromising the future of Italian opera at the very

of simple secular allegories and amorous cantatas of perfectly sickening foolishness. (See the *duetto da camera, " O mirate che portenti,"* in M. Gevaert's *Gloires de l'Italie;* or the cantata *Il Ciarlatano,* for three soprani and a *basso continuo,* in Signor Luigi Torchi's *Arte Musicale in Italia.* The latter has for subject Disdain, who disguises himself as a mountebank and sells remedies for the wounds of Love.) It was perhaps rather by his secular cantatas than by his sacred cantatas that Carissimi most influenced the music of his time. And even in his sacred music his taste is often a long way from being irreproachable. Sir Hubert Parry, in his *Oxford History of Music* (Volume III), is right when he says that Carissimi was one of the greatest secularizers of Church music, and one of the greatest sinners of his time in the extravagant ornaments with which he sometimes adorned sacred words. There are many prejudices to be destroyed about Carissimi; and perhaps his gifts do not warrant the prominent place he holds in the history of music; though his genius is certainly incontestable. The present writer has himself contributed his feeble share in spreading wrong opinions about him.

moment when its power was spreading in Europe. Naturally if this was the case, it was because there was no longer anybody in Italy robust enough and ready-witted enough to throw off such a yoke, and because Italian artists had become too civilized and domesticated. One thing hangs to another; and it is important to observe here that the masters of musical form in the middle of the seventeenth century, the Carissimi and the Luigi Rossi, were the first artisans of the Italian decadence, as were all those who, indifferent to the meaning of life, substituted an ideal of pure beauty for an ideal of truth.

The three names of Rossi, Carissimi, and Cesti, indicate the new position of this art. In 1688 Perti called them "the three most shining glories of music,"[1] thus sacrificing the Monteverdes and the Cavallis, the geniuses of freedom and the open air, to the three great masters of cantata and concert-opera.

Such was the artistic rôle of Luigi before his arrival in France, and before he became the founder of our opera. Only one opera of his is known to exist before *Orfeo*, and that is *Il Palazzo incantato, overo la Guerriere amante*, played at Rome in 1642.[2] The poem was taken from *Orlando furioso*, and it had not less than fifty scenes and twenty-four characters. The music was beautiful, though very

[1] *Cantate morali e spirituali.*

[2] This opera is also known under the name of *Il Palagio d'Atlante*. The libretto and score are at the *Liceo musicale* of Bologna; the Vatican Library also possesses two copies of the score. Cametti tells us of another copy in the library at Chigi. Cf. Henry Prunières' *Les Représentations du Palazzo d'Atlante à Rome.*

melancholy; and in the whole work one recognizes the model of Venetian opera, which, in order to please a superficial public, had always plenty of solos and concert-room airs and a great variety of episodes. *Orfeo* also belongs to this fragmentary genus, with its numberless scenes, its lack of unity and reason, and its pandering to the eyes and the ears rather than to the mind. The author of the poem was Mgr Ruspigliosi. When one remembers that he was then the aristocratic librettist *par excellence* and a friend of the Barberini, and also that the two chief parts in the piece were played by Loreto Vittori and Marco Antonio Pasqualini, the princes of song in Rome, one has then a new proof of the popularity that Luigi enjoyed with the Barberini and the nobles that gravitated about them. He was indeed the most fashionable of musicians.

The little society of the Via del Babbuino suffered from the results of the revolution which ended in the Barberini's downfall. In 1647, Salvator Rosa had to fly from Rome to Florence, where prince Mattia de' Medici, the patron of Atto Melani, had been wanting him to come for some time. The same year, Luigi Rossi[1] was in Paris with the Barberini, supervising rehearsals of his *Orfeo*, "which he had written expressly for production at the carnival."[2]

. . . . . .

[1] Luigi left Rome in November 1646. A month afterwards his wife died at Rome, and this grievous loss was not without its influence, which may be found in the sadness of some of the songs of *Orfeo*.

[2] Gobert.

IV

THE PRODUCTION OF "ORFEO" IN PARIS AND THE RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL OPPOSITION TO OPERA

We know the names of the principal actors in *Orfeo*–through a letter written by Atto Melani to prince Mattia on January 12, 1647. Atto himself was playing Orpheus; La Checca, the former protagonist of *La Finta Pazza*, was singing Eurydice; Marco Antonio Pasqualini, the celebrated treble from Rome, had the part of Aristeus; Signora Rosina Martini, a protégée of prince Mattia, who had come armed with a letter of recommendation to Mazarin, played Venus; "the *castrato* of the Signori Bentivogli" played Eurydice's nurse.[1] We may ignore the other names, but it is probable that one of Melani's brothers also had a part.

The first performance took place at the Palais-Royal, at the end of Shrove-tide, on Saturday, March 2, 1647.[2] The opera was given again on Sunday, March 3, and Tuesday, March 5, and then the austerities of Lent interrupted its run, and another performance was not given until after Lent. The queen had *Orfeo* played again on April 29, in honour of the Danish ambassador's wife; and on

[1] Letter from Atto Melani to prince Mattia, January 12, 1647.

[2] Mme de Motteville seems to say that *La Finta Pazza* was revived at the same time: "It was a comedy with mechanical effects and music after the Italian fashion, which was very beautiful, *and one that we had already seen*, which seemed to us a thing of unusual splendour." There is probably some fault of construction or grammar here.

May 6 and 8 for the duchesse de Longueville, " who had lately returned from Munster." Condé, without doubt, would be present at the first performance, before his departure for the army in Catalonia ; and the prince of Wales (the future Charles II) was one of the guests of the court. Mme de Motteville gives some interesting details about the first performance :

" This comedy could not be got ready until the last days of the Carnival ; and on this account, cardinal Mazarin and the duc d'Orleans urged the queen to have it played during Lent. But the queen, who was very particular in matters of her conscience, would not consent to this. She even showed some indifference to the comedy, because it was being shown for the first time on a Saturday, and could not begin until late ; for she wished to perform her devotions on Shrove Sunday, and the night before she made her Communion had been used to go to bed in good time, in order to get up early the next morning. She did not wish, however, to lose her enjoyment altogether, for the sake of those who were providing it ; but as she also wished to do what she considered her duty, she left the comedy half-way through it, and retired to say her prayers, and to sup and go to bed at the proper hour, and so leave undisturbed the order of her existence. Cardinal Mazarin showed some displeasure about this ; and although it was only a trifle, but serious enough to allow the queen to do even more than she did—that is to say, to see nothing at all of

the comedy—yet it was thought that she had acted against the wishes of her minister. And as he showed he was annoyed, this little friction was very pleasant to a great number of people. And tongues and ears were fruitlessly occupied for several days, and the most sober-minded felt some delicious moments of happiness."

I can hardly believe that Mme de Motteville's persistent ill-feeling towards Mazarin did not a little dim her clear-sightedness, or that the queen on this occasion acted against the cardinal's wish and without his consent. This pious behaviour was not only an affair of conscience, but a prudent political move as well; for the Italian plays had raised some storms among the clergy of Paris. Since the arrival of Leonora, and especially of Melani, the queen had become more absorbed by music and the theatre than Mazarin liked. Theatrical performances alternated with concerts; and in 1647 the queen, who up to that time had been hidden from view on account of her mourning, now appeared in public every evening.[1]

Mazarin's enemies were not slow to make scandal; and they put forward a priest, the curé of Saint-Germain, who loudly voiced their complaints. The queen then felt uneasy and went to consult some

[1] "In the evenings, the court in its splendour assembled at the Palais-Royal in the little hall for comedies. The queen sat upon a kind of platform in order to hear better, and went down from it by a little staircase not far from her own room. With her were the king, cardinal Mazarin, and sometimes people she wished to entertain, either on account of their rank or to show them favour" (Mme de Motteville).

bishops, who, however, reassured her. But the curé of Saint-Germain was not yet beaten. He went to the Sorbonne and got seven doctors to sign their names to an opinion that "comedy could not be witnessed by Christians without sin, and that the princes ought to drive all comedy actors from their kingdoms."[1] The queen thrust back with a reply from ten or a dozen other doctors, who asserted that comedies were good and lawful for princes.

"Monsieur le Cardinal," says Goulas (and this passage from an angry enemy lets us see the cardinal's calm and crafty attitude)—"Monsieur le Cardinal, who was implicated in this affair by the pleasure he took in Italian Comedy, thought fit to say nothing, knowing that he had enough followers and frivolous friends at court to uphold his interests in the matter. But," adds Goulas, "he knew that religion could not uphold him or this perpetual acting, this love of the nastiness of the theatre, and the worst and most licentious practices of a court whom he invited to share his pleasures and whom he had always about him."

And so, at the time of the production of *Orfeo*, there arose open rebellion against the Italian theatre, in the name of a puritanism more or less hypocritical. The cardinal maintained the greatest reserve in the quarrel; and the queen went her own way and, whatever her scruples were, made no renouncement in her pleasures. She was indeed very imprudent in her relations with the actors and

[1] *Mémoires de Nicolas Goulas, gentilhomme ordinaire de la chambre du duc d'Orléans* (Société de l'histoire de France, II, 203).

actresses. Leonora never left her side, and Melani made fatuous complaints about the queen not being able to do without him. She took him with her on a journey to Amiens ; and although his leave had expired and he was awaited in Florence, she could not decide to let him go. She wrote tactless letters to Mattia de' Medici, asking him to let her keep this seductive treble singer a little while longer.[1] She ended by getting a sharp lesson from her hostess, the proud princess of Palestrina, Donna Anna Colonna Barberini.[2] One of the Italian comedy actresses who sang in *Orfeo* " being reputed to have sold her beauty in Italy," says Goulas, " was still received by the queen, even in her private apartments. It is said that one day the queen asked the wife of the prefect Barberini if she often saw this actress when she was in Rome, and if she brought her to the house, as she sang so well and had so beautiful a voice. The proud daughter of the high constable Colonna did not reply at first ; and when the queen pressed her further, she said hotly, ' If she had come I should have had her thrown out of the window.' This astonished the queen very much, and she changed colour, and began to speak of something else."[3]

So we see that the queen did not err on the side

[1] Letter from Anne of Austria to Mattia, May 23, 1647 ; letter from Melani to Mattia, June 25, 1647 ; letter from Mazarin to Mattia, July 10, 1647.

[2] " The princess of Palestrina was old ; but she had been beautiful ; she did not know French, but she talked a great deal, was very witty, and extremely proud of her name " (Mme de Motteville).

[3] Goulas, II, 212–3.

of prudery—at least so far as music went ;[1] and the little show of religion in March 1647, at the first performance of *Orfeo*, could not have displeased Mazarin as much as his sovereign's imprudences, which had more than once caused him embarrassment.

The same desire to appease the puritan opposers of opera certainly inspired the end of an article by Renaudot in his *Gazette*. After having greatly praised the music and poetry of *Orfeo*, the journalist finishes up thus :

> " But what makes that piece still more notable, and draws praise from the bitterest critics of comedy, is that virtue is always victorious over vice, in spite of the difficulties that present themselves. Orpheus and Eurydice were not only faithful in their chaste love, notwithstanding the efforts of Venus and Bacchus, the two most powerful authors of moral laxity, but Love himself opposed his mother, as he did not wish to lead Eurydice to be faithless to her husband. Shall we not also expect something beyond honest instruction in what is good, when a play is honoured by the presence of one so wise and devout as our own queen ? "

These strange protestations of virtue would admit

[1] It is known that her reputation was unhappily quite the reverse in the matter of painting. Sauval maintains that on her accession to the regency in 1643, she had more than a hundred thousand écus' worth of pictures burnt at Fontainebleau, because they offended decency.

of but a poor explanation if there had been no real danger to be faced. It was not a question of raising futile opposition in the name of morality, as sometimes happens to-day, when at intervals a few people uplift their voices, like those crying in the desert, with no one to listen to them. The puritanism of that time had some redoubtable supporters; for did they not stir up England, and a year later bring about the execution of Charles I, whose son had been present at the performance of *Orfeo*?[1]

But in spite of all precautions, it was impossible to escape religious censure. "The devout ones murmured," says Mme de Motteville; "and those who were inclined, through lawlessness of spirit, to blame everything that was done, were ready, as usual, to poison these pleasures, because they were the kind of people who could not breathe the air itself without grief and anger."

But it was difficult to feel morally outraged by *Orfeo*, or for discontented people to find a subject of scandal in a play where Love refuses to turn Eurydice aside from her conjugal duties, and where Eurydice dies by an excess of modesty truly rare, and worthy of the frequenters of the Salon Bleu. For Eurydice, in Orpheus's absence, was bitten on the leg by a serpent, and refused to let Aristeus take the reptile away, "for fear," says Renaudot, "of

[1] Even in France, in December 1647, Parliament revived the savage tortures of the Middle Ages—the gibbet, the wheel, and the mutilation of the tongue—for those who blasphemed against, not only God, but the Virgin and the saints. These tortures had been suppressed under Richelieu (*Recueil des anciennes lois françaises*, XVII, 65).

offending her husband by giving his rival the freedom of touching her."[1]

Hypocrisy was here disarmed; though it found its revenge elsewhere. Nor was it possible to dispute the magnificence of the production and its success. The Parliamentarians[2] were invited to see it; and being of a dull and sullen turn of mind, and the resigned enemies of Mazarin, they did their best to be bored with it; and played their part well. But even their grumbling spirit was obliged to recognize the conquest of the Italians; and those who pretended to yawn at the first performance had not the strength to withstand the general infatuation. Olivier Lefèvre d'Ormesson, who said on March 2 that "the Italian language, which was difficult to understand, was tiresome,"[3] saw the piece again on May 8, and found it finer than he did the first time, "as the whole was better practised." Montglat sulkily records that "the comedy lasted more than six hours" and that "one was bored by its length without being able to show it, and had to sit still without understanding the language, and admire it all out of politeness." But he acknow-

[1] And with what discourses on offended modesty!

[2] "The principal personages of the Royal corps and companies."

[3] On March 2, after having dined with Mme de Sevigné, Lefèvre d'Ormesson went to the Palais-Royal to see the performance of the great comedy, into which he was admitted, after having waited an hour and a half, by means of Mme de la Mothe. . . . "The voices were fine," he said, "but the Italian language, which was difficult to understand, was tiresome" (*Mémoires d'O. Lefèvre d'Ormesson*). Renaudot assures us, however, that the actors played so perfectly "that they could be understood by those who had no knowledge of their language."

ledged that the piece was "very pleasant to see once, and the many changes of scene were surprising."[1] He broadly hints, in his insincerity, that if the queen was careful not to miss a single performance, it was because she was anxious to please the cardinal and was afraid of vexing him. In reality, the queen was present at the whole of the piece on the morrow following the first performance, and attended all subsequent performances "without ever getting tired of them." Mme de Motteville tells us this, and she is not to be suspected of much friendly feeling towards Mazarin.[2] The little king "bestowed as much attention on it as ever; and although her Majesty had already seen it twice, she wished to go to a third performance, and showed no sign of weariness at the idea, although she ought to have been very tired after the ball the day before, at which she had done such wonders."[3]

The success of the piece was wonderful. The mechanical scenic effects astonished the spectators, "so that they were doubtful if they were still in their places";[4] and the music quite agitated them, especially the chorus which follows the death of Eurydice; in fact this *lamento* of the Nymphs and Apollo over the loss of the "poor dead one" drew tears from their eyes. "The power of the vocal and instrumental music reached their hearts through their ears, and would have had a still more

[1] *Mémoires du marquis de Montglat* (Petitot, pp. 59–60).
[2] *Mme de Motteville*, p. 238.
[3] *Renaudot*, March 8.
[4] *Ibid.*

moving effect if the Sun had not come down in a flaming chariot, glistening with gold, carbuncles, and diamonds, and excited subdued murmurs of applause."[1]

Mme de Motteville quotes two courtiers, who were very distinguished for their enthusiasm; one is "the marshal de Gramont, an eloquent and witty Gascon, who in his audacious praise set the comedy above the wonders of the world; and the other, the duc de Montemart, himself an excellent amateur musician and a great courtier, who seemed to be enchanted by the very mention of the least of the actors. And the whole company, in order to please the minister, were so exaggerated in their speech, that they became annoying to the more temperate talkers." As for Naudé, he said at the end of the performance that "one heard nothing but the exclamations of those who were loudly praising the things that had made most impression upon them";[2] and he quotes some Latin verse "that a Portuguese Franciscan friar, R. P. Macedo, had composed in praise of the comedy."

People could not very well quarrel with the success of the piece, at least not at the time.[3] But the

[1] Renaudot. A good example of the style of the first musical criticism to appear in a French newspaper!

[2] "This comedy was performed, as it were, in the presence of the whole of France, and accompanied by the approval, indeed even by the raptures and admiration, of all those who professed to understand it . . ." (Naudé, *Jugement de tout ce qui a été imprimé contre le cardinal*, 1649).

[3] That did not prevent Mazarin's enemies, or those jealous of Luigi, from perverting the truth, and mocking at the tediousness of *Orfeo* in very much the same way that the comic papers

opposition party made up for this in another way. Not being able to charge *Orfeo* with being a failure, they said it was too gorgeous and too expensive. This new move on the part of the enemy was not less dangerous than their religious arguments. Poverty was rife at that time and the taxes were mounting up ; that very year people were expecting the highest taxes that had ever been levied. The Parliamentarians pretended to pose as defenders of the people against the financial expedients of Mazarin and his Italians ; and they could scarcely fail to call the hungry nation's attention to the excessive expenditure of the cardinal on the pleasures of the court and the Italian plays. The reproach here had a good foundation; but it was exaggerated, and the sums lavished on *Orfeo* were grossly magnified. Naudé protested in vain that only thirty thousand crowns had been spent.[1] The thirty thousand became four hundred thousand according to Montglat, and five hundred thousand according to Guy Joly. "This comedy with music," said the latter, "cost more than five hundred thousand crowns, and caused everyone to reflect, particularly the Royal party, who were

mocked at the soporific qualities of Tannhaüser in 1860. "This beautiful but unhappy *Orpheus*," they said, "or, to speak more correctly, this Morpheus—since everyone went to sleep. . . "

[1] "The implication was that an expense of thirty thousand crowns for the upkeep of the court, even in so large a town as Paris, was something very unusual ; and they made it a crime for a single comedy to be seen during the Regency, although formerly it was considered only polite to have such entertainments every year, and to have ballets very frequently, the expense of which was far greater than that of a comedy like *Orfeo*" (Naudé, *ibid.*).

being harassed, and who thought that as so much money had been spent, the needs of the State could not be urgent."[1] And Goulas shows us that the perfidious complaints of the Parliamentarians attained their end, and at length succeeded in rousing the people; and in his own words he tells us that "M. le Cardinal's comedy caused so much talk and tumult among the people, that they thought of nothing else; for each one was angered by the dreadful expense of the machinery and Italian musicians, who had come from Rome and elsewhere at great cost, because they had to be paid to leave Italy, and then supported in France."

Mazarin saw the storm coming, and grew uneasy about it. A letter from Melani, which we have quoted above, announced that the queen was having another comedy in music prepared, which was to be produced after *Orfeo*.[2] Mazarin set himself against this idea. "The following year," says Naudé, "he opposed the wishes of the whole court, and absolutely put a stop to their plans for another comedy, which would have cost quite as much as *Orfeo*."[3] Naudé even adds that "if people would only believe it, no one would have thought about the first one; and those who urged its introduction were involved in the matter unconsciously."

[1] *Mémoires de Guy Joly* (Petitot, XLVII, p. 11).

[2] Letter from Atto Melani, January 12, 1647. Perhaps it was about the production of a musical drama by Margherita Costa, called *The Defiance of Apollo and Mars*.

[3] Besides that, the illness of the little king, who had smallpox, and the troubles of the Fronde, interrupted all festivities.

However, nothing was of any avail; and these excuses—some of which were not very plausible—did not stop slander from going its way. The expenses of *Orfeo* remained the chief grievance against the cardinal during the civil wars. "When they wished to find something to charge him with, they brought this play against him, and gave him cause to say with Ovid:

"O nimis exitio nata theatra mea!" [1]

The unpopularity of *Orfeo* is shown in the persecution suffered by Torelli, the mechanician—the real author of the piece in the eyes of the general public. He was pursued, imprisoned, and ruined during the Fronde; and his life was menaced, like those of other Italians who remained in Paris, and who had taken part in the productions of 1645 and 1647.

And this is why, although the first Italian opera in Paris was a great success, many years elapsed before opera found a definite place in France.[2]

[1] Naudé, p. 575. Naudé went so far as to call Mazarin "the Martyr of the State," because the whole responsibility of the cost of *Orfeo* was put upon his shoulders.

[2] *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*, by Michel de la Guerre and Charles de Beys (the libretto of which was found by M. Quittard), was composed in 1654; the *Pastorale* of Perrin and Cambert (*Opéra d'Issy*) in 1659; the *Serse* of Cavalli was played at the Louvre in 1660; and the *Pomone* of Cambert inaugurated the Académie d'Opéra in 1671.

It may be of some interest to note that Mazarin patronized La Guerre's endeavours, as well as those of Perrin and Cambert; and that two months before his death he had *Serse* played in his own room (January 11, 1661). The immortal Melani played two parts in the piece.

V

"ORFEO"

The poem of *Orfeo* was written by the abbé Francesco Buti of Rome, as we have already said; and we have an account of it from two contemporary writers: one in the *Gazette* of March 8, 1647, by Renaudot; and the other in a rather confused work called *Représentations en musique anciennes et modernes*,[1] by Father Menestrier.

These accounts, rough as they appear, are yet fairly accurate. The poem of *Orfeo* is a medley of strange devices. The characters in it are as follows: Orpheus; Eurydice; Endymion, the father of Eurydice; Aristeus, the lover of Eurydice; a Satyr; a Nurse; Venus, Juno, Proserpina, Jupiter, Mercury, Pluto, Apollo, Cupid, Charon, Momus, Hymen, the Three Graces, the Three Fates, the Dryads; Jealousy and Suspicion; the followers of the Soothsayer and the Celestial Court—about thirty parts in all.

The beautiful classical subject is complicated with a number of ridiculous incidents. On the eve of her marriage with Orpheus, Eurydice, accompanied by her father, consults a soothsayer as to the future, and is frightened by his forebodings. Aristeus, the son of Bacchus, is madly in love with

[1] Paris, 1681. Bonnet and Bourdelot, in their *Histoire de la musique et de ses effets* (Amsterdam, 1715), have copied out a great part of Menestrier's account; but they apply it, oddly enough, to a play produced in Vienna in 1660 in honour of the marriage of the emperor Leopold; and they say nothing at all about the play of 1647 in Paris. They criticize the piece elsewhere as "having served as one of the models of French opera."

Eurydice, and begs Venus to stop her marriage. Venus, who hates Orpheus, as the son of her rival, the Sun, hatches plots against the two lovers. She takes the form of an old woman and goes with evil counsels to Eurydice, who dismisses her. Then Venus, being unable to persuade her own son, Cupid, to change Eurydice's feelings, causes her to die. Juno, to spite Venus, takes Orpheus's part; and she undertakes to descend into Hades to seek for Eurydice. In order to make her task easier she awakens Proserpina's jealousy by remarking on Pluto's regard for the beautiful woman who has died. As Proserpina is eager to get rid of her rival, and the whole of Hades is stirred by Orpheus's songs, the two lovers are sent back to earth. But they disobey the laws of Hades, and Eurydice returns once more among the dead. Aristeus, in despair at Eurydice's tragic end, and pursued by her shade carrying serpents in its hands, goes mad and kills himself. Venus then excites Bacchus to avenge the death of his son upon Orpheus; and Bacchus and the Bacchantes tear the Thracian singer to pieces. In the Apotheosis the constellation of Lyra is seen rising in the sky, and choirs sing the glory of love and conjugal fidelity. Lastly, Jupiter, in a recitative air full of stately vocal flourishes, points the moral of the story in a madrigal addressed to the queen.

A few comic characters serve to lighten this series of catastrophes: sometimes it is the buxom nurse; sometimes an old he-goat (as Renaudot says) —in other words a satyr; or again it is Momus

slandering women.[1] The most serious scenes are stuffed with foolery; and one is a long way off the sober tragedy of Rinuccini and Striggio, and the thoughtful and nobly plastic art of the Florentines. Here the taste of Venice and Naples holds sway—the taste of opulent and restless plebeians, not that of an intellectual aristocracy.

The accounts of Renaudot and Menestrier also include a report of the setting and the acting of the piece, and a few details which describe its outside aspects.

"The action began by the appearance of two large bodies of infantry, fully armed, and representing two armies.[2] They fought one another, but not enough to annoy the audience with the noise and clatter of their arms.[3] One of the armies besieged a place and the other defended it. When a large piece of wall had fallen down, and the French army was able to pass over it, Victory descended from the sky and sang verses in honour of the King's army and of the wise rule of his mother, the Queen.[4] No one could

[1] "Woman is an object who always makes man ridiculous. If she is ugly—oh! what a misery! If she is beautiful—oh! what a danger! And whether one takes her or leaves her, one always repents one's action" (Act I, scene 5).

[2] Menestrier.

[3] Renaudot.

[4] Menestrier.

Victory: "Behold me! And when, O invincible armies of Gaul, have I ever failed you? I walk with these banners; these golden lilies that flame are my own badge, and clearly say: 'Let all yield to the French Monarch!' Behold me! It is I who have received your King in a bower of trophies, and who have placed a thousand palms upon his brow. It is I

understand how Victory's chariot was able to stay so long suspended in the sky."[1]

Then follows a description of the decorations, and changes of scene.[2] At first it is "a grove, whose extent seems to be a hundred times greater than that of the theatre." Then "the scene discloses a table superbly ornamented for the marriage feast. Venus descends in a cloud with a band of little Cupids." The entrance to Hades was represented by "a terrible desert, caverns, rocks, and a grotto-like passage, at the end of which was seen a little daylight." After Eurydice had been returned to Orpheus, the monsters of the lower world danced a grotesque ballet, the music of which has not been preserved in the score,[3] though it was one of the greatest successes of the opera—"one of the most amusing things," as Renaudot says. "There were bucentaurs, owls, tortoises, snails, and other strange

who make the two hemispheres tremble under his rule, and place a curb for him upon the great Ocean. . . . His happy fates wish that glory may shine on you through the eyes of the noble Anne, whose beautiful hands hold the sceptre and hurl the thunderbolts . . ." (Prologue from *Orfeo*).

[1] Renaudot.

[2] Despite the opinion of Nuitter and Thoinan, Voiture's sonnet to cardinal Mazarin on the *Comédie des machines* seems to me to apply as well to *Orfeo* as to *La Finta Pazza*. See in Voiture's works the sonnet: "Quelle docte Circé, quelle nouvelle Armide. . . ." The success of the mechanical appliances in *Orfeo* contributed to the creation of a certain number of French lyric tragedies, which were magnificently produced, such as Rotrou's *La Naissance d'Hercule* (1649), and Corneille's *Andromède* (1650). It is known that in *Andromède* (the music of which was by Assoucy, a friend of Luigi) the mechanical apparatus from *Orfeo* was utilized.

[3] The copyist has only written, "*Qui và la Danza.*"

and monstrous animals of the most hideous aspect, who danced to the sound of cowherds' horns, with extravagant steps and music to match." Songs were frequently accompanied with dances. Here we have "Orpheus and Eurydice sing and dance"; or "the satyr dances with goat's feet"; further, "the Dryads dance with castagnets"; or again, "the Bacchantes dance with little bells on their feet, a tambourine in one hand and a bottle in the other."

At the end of the performance Orpheus's lyre was carried up into the sky and transformed into a fleur-de-lys, as Mercury's discourse points out at the end of *Orfeo*.

French artists had collaborated with Torelli for the scenic effects and costumes. Charles Errard, the future director of the Académie de France at Rome, was stage-manager; and his plans were carried out by a set of young painters and sculptors, among whom were the elder Sève, and Coypel, who made his début there.[1]

[1] "Cardinal Mazarin employed (in 1646) M. Errard for all the decorative effects of an Italian opera, whose subject was *The Loves of Orpheus and Eurydice*, which was given in the same room where Opera is given to-day. M. Errard was suggested for that work by M. de Ratabon, head-clerk for the superintendence of buildings. The decorations of this play were magnificent, and included a painted room, whose ornaments were enriched with gold. In the panelling, which was elaborately designed, were to be seen several pictures painted by the elder de Sève, and finished after designs sketched out by M. Errard. It was in that room that M. Coypel first began to work for M. Errard, who set him to enrich with gold a great frieze of foliage and leafy ornaments which were drawn in perspective. Although the frieze had been sketched out by painters thought to be very clever at that sort of work, it had nearly all been spoilt; and M. Errard perceiving that M. Coypel

The music of *Orfeo* was long thought to be lost, but after two centuries and a half the manuscript score has been found in the Chigi Library at Rome.[1] Two copies of it have been made; one for the Paris Conservatoire, and the other for the Brussels Conservatoire. An old score of *Orfeo* used to exist in Paris in the Conservatoire Library in the Philidor collection. Fétis saw it; but since his directorship all trace of it has disappeared.[2]

The score is written after the ordinary way of Italian scores about the middle of the seventeenth century. The *Sinfonie*, which open the acts, and the ballets are in four parts. The airs are simply accompanied by a figured bass. The instruments are not marked; and the greater part of the voices are soprano. That was the taste of the time, and Luigi seems particularly to have pandered to it. His acquaintance with the most celebrated virtuosi of Rome—with Loreto Vittori, Marco Antonio Pasqualini, and Atto Melani—has almost certainly influenced his style. The greater part of his numerous airs, which have been preserved at the Biblio-

was putting it right, gladly allowed him to do the whole of the room, and gave him many testimonies of his friendship, besides offering him all his drawings to study. M. Coypel was then only fifteen or sixteen years old, and is to-day director of the Academy."

Notice sur Charles Errard, by Guillet de Saint-Georges, from his *Mémoires inédits sur la vie et les ouvrages des membres de l'Académie Royale de peinture et sculpture*, Paris, 1854.

[1] *Orfeo. Poesia del Sig. Franc. Buti. Musica del Sig. Luigi Rossi.* Full score with an alphabetical index.

[2] It is remarkable that Fétis speaks of this in August 1827, in the *Revue musicale* (see Nuitter and Thoinan), and that in the article in his *Dictionnaire* on Luigi Rossi, he omits to mention *Orfeo*, though he must have been acquainted with it.

thèque Nationale in Paris, are written for a soprano with violin accompaniment. In the rhythm there is a preponderance of three-time, and of dance measures, which are one of the characteristics of French opera, and obviously connected with the Ballet-Comedy.[1] Perhaps the abuse of this is less evident in *Orfeo* than in other pieces of the time, such as Cavalli's *Serse;* for Luigi made an effort to vary his time and his light and shade. It was this diversity that struck the hearers of *Orfeo.* Renaudot naively remarks: "The artifice was admirable and inimitable,[2] and the manner always in accordance with the subject, whether it was sad or joyous, or expressive of any kind of passion; so that it was not the least of marvels that though the whole action was sung or recited, *which is the ordinary sign of gaiety,* yet the music was as appropriate to the things it expressed, as the words were to the feelings of those who recited them." So it seems that Luigi revealed the power of musical expression to the French journalists. Renaudot was astonished to find that music could serve other purposes besides that of a mere accompaniment to songs.

Luigi's variety of expression was indeed likely to cause astonishment in musicians of greater

[1] It was a fault that ran through nearly the whole period—at any rate through all the opera of that time. Signor Amintore Galli says in his *Estetica della musica* (Turin, 1900), "In the first half of the seventeenth century, three-time and the rhythm of the grave saraband reigned over all opera. Dance rhythms and vocalized passages were characteristic of the work of this period of melodramatic incubation."

[2] He was speaking of the scene of the Satyr and Aristeus.

experience than his audience at the Palais-Royal. In the Bibliothèque Nationale there is an air of about fifty bars,[1] "*Che cosa mi disse,*" where he employs the following time signatures: 6/8 (three bars); 3/4 (five bars); 6/8 (two bars); 3/4 (eight bars); 4/4 (three bars and a half); 3/8 (three bars); 4/4 (eight bars); 3/8 (six bars); 3/2 (five bars); 3/8 (one bar); 3/4 (eight bars). The result of this variety of pace is a suppleness of musical utterance very expressive of different shades of feeling. And yet this free style of declamation keeps a definite outline, and is not vague and attenuated like the Florentine recitative—it is an *aria* with a well-shaped form.

Saint-Évremond, who did not like recitatives at all, is especially severe with those in *Orfeo*.[2] "I admit," he says, "that Luigi's opera contained some inimitable things so far as expression of feeling and the charm of the music went; but most of its recitative was so wearisome that even the Italians impatiently awaited the finer parts, which, in their opinion, did not come often enough."[3] And Saint-Évremond is not altogether wrong; for despite some very beautiful pages (such as Orpheus's despair in the Thracian desert), one realizes that Luigi wrote the greater part of his recitatives without pleasure, and that he was only truly himself in the *aria*. It is for the *aria* that he

[1] *Recueil d'excellents airs italiens de différents auteurs d'après Brossard.*

[2] "The Italian recitative is a bad custom both in singing and speaking."

[3] *Lettre sur les Opera.*

reserves, not only all his melodic charm, but his whole power of expression. Except in rare moments of tragedy, the recitatives show weariness. That can be understood when so eminently plastic a genius was struggling with as diffuse and strange a poem as that of *Orfeo*. The Florentine musical declamation needed a poem that was sober and restrained in feeling, to serve as a solid frame for the song. How on earth were the stupidities and superfluities of the abbé Buti to be declaimed! The only thing to do would have been to curtail some of the yards of insipid recitative, which unrolled themselves for hours like an endless ribbon upon a white road. But the poet evidently could not make up his mind to this, and so the music suffered. To my notion, it was a great misfortune for lyric drama that the melodramatic reform in Florence did not lend a helping hand to a reform in poetry as well;[1] or at least that the reformers of

[1] In spite of Rinuccini and the birth (interesting enough for literary history) of a series of musical playwrights such as Gabriello Chiabrera, Alessandro Striggio (author of Monteverde's *Orfeo*), Ottavio Tronsarelli (thirty-three *Drammi musicali*, Rome, 1632), and Girolamo Bartolommei (*Drammi musicali*, 1656), whose *Teodora* and *Polietto*, published in 1632 in a volume of sacred tragedies, probably inspired Corneille's famous works. The first of these Musical Dramas of 1655, *Cerere racconsolata*, is dedicated "*all' Eminentissimo Sig. Cardinale Giulio Mazzarini.*" (See H. Hauvette, *Un précurseur italien de Corneille*, Grenoble, 1897.)

Signor Angelo Solerti had lately begun the publication of the musical *libretti* of the first half of the seventeenth century. (See his *Albori del Melodramma*, Volumes II and III, on the work of Rinuccini, Chiabrera, Striggio, Campeggi, St. Landi, O. Corsini, etc.) Death unfortunately put an end to this fine enterprise, as it did to many other valuable works of this great scholar.

poetry, the champions of truth and nature, did not, especially in France, make friends with Opera. They disowned it, however; and so nothing remained for the musicians but the poets of the court. This dull collaboration with a nerveless style full of foolish pretentiousness and forced sentiment, and lacking in sincerity and life, had a deplorable influence on musicians. It taught them idle formulas, and weighed heavily on dramatic music until our own day,[1] and until musicians had the courage—rash courage though it was—to be their own poets in default of poets worthy of their music.[2]

In the *Aria* the musician had more freedom, and the foolishness of the librettist troubled him less. Even that theorist of the Florentine drama, Giambattista Doni,[3] teaches that it is not the sense of certain words that have to be translated into music, but the general feeling of the whole poem. Doni is, however, an ardent defender of dramatic truth; and he condemns the introduction of *canzonette* and purely lyrical airs into musical drama, in both of which Luigi delighted. With Luigi, indeed, the balance between music and poetry is frankly upset in favour of music;[4] pure melody takes a pre-

[1] How much Rameau had to suffer from it!

[2] Even in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there were a few who dared this: Peri, Loreto Vittori, Ferrari, Manelli, Stradella, Mattheson, etc.

[3] *Trattato della musica scenica.* Doni died in 1647, the same year that *Orfeo* was produced.

[4] Saint-Évremond himself reproaches Luigi—as well as others, including Cavalli and Cesti—with sacrificing the play to the music, and forgetting his hero through the fascination of his art. "The musician's thought is more important than that of the hero in the opera; it is Luigi, or Cavallo, or Cesti,

ponderant place in his opera, and achieves a quite classical beauty of structure. Its form was outlined by him, and is afterwards found in Alessandro Scarlatti and Händel. The *Aria da Capo* is frequent in *Orfeo*,[1] and in the collections of Rossi's airs in the Bibliothèque Nationale.[2] But it is not the only kind of air used by him; for sometimes he writes airs in two parts, in the form of *cavatinas*,[3] and sometimes he introduces recitatives (decorated with elaborate vocalizations)[4] into ariettas; or again dramatic recitatives are cut up into regular strophes, at the end of which comes a beautiful melodic phrase of expressive character, like two rhymed lines at the end of a period of blank verse. Such is Orpheus's *lamento*[5]—an *arioso* recitative

who comes before us, and not the characters of the drama" (*Lettre sur les Opera*).

[1] See, for example, Eurydice's arietta, "*Quando un core inamorato*," on page 298 of Herr Hugo Goldschmidt's *Studien zur Geschichte der italienischen Oper im 17. Jahrhundert* (Volume I). In that excellent work (which appeared at the same time as the present essay on Luigi Rossi in the *Revue d'Histoire et de Critique musicales*) will be found numerous fragments from *Orfeo*.

[2] In the *Recueil d'airs italiens*, adorned with the arms of Charles-Maurice le Tellier, archbishop of Rheims, the eleventh air, *Non sarà, non fù, non è*, begins by a lively movement in four time, is continued by an adagio in three-two time, and then returns to four time. See also the airs in the same collection: *Anime voi che sete dalle furie;* Brossard's *Deh, Deh, socorri; Chi trovasse una speranza; Non sempre ingombra;* etc. You will see similar instances in the collection of *Cantates*.

[3] See Eurydice's air on page 301 in Herr Goldschmidt's book —*Fugace e labile è la beltà*, which Herr Goldschmidt compares with Händel's celebrated air from *Rinaldo*—*Lascia ch'io pianga*.

[4] See Herr Goldschmidt's work, *Die Lehre von der vokalen Ornamentik* (1907), for Luigi's vocalizations and vocal passages.

[5] Act III, scene 10. This admirable scene is to be found at the end of this volume. It has remained unpublished up to the present.

after the manner of Gluck, carved in the strong relief of a great classic, and not in the low relief of the early Florentines.

Luigi also tried various vocal combinations in his opera. He divided his solos and recitatives by duets, trios, quartets, and choruses for six and eight voices. It is in music for several voices that Luigi has shown the best of his grace and ingenuity. He has there an eclectic nature, following no particular style, but employing each one in turn, and adapting them to his own style with a suppleness which seems to me one of his most characteristic features as an artist. He knows how to express varied feelings by varied means. At times, in the choruses of a more archaic turn, such as those on the death of Eurydice, he cuts the grave and stately thread of the *lamento* by loud cries of grief and fine syncopated chords, which recall Carissimi's *Plainte des Damnez.*[1] At other times he forestalls and surpasses Lully in his graceful trios, where voices call and intermingle and sport among themselves, replying to the instruments with a quick and lively elegance.[2] If it is true, as Mattheson says (according to Lecerf and Viéville),[3] that the trio is the most difficult of pieces for more than one voice, it is only just to give Luigi the honour of having set the first models

[1] Act II, scene 9. See Goldschmidt's *Studien.*

[2] Act II, scene 5. A delicious trio of the Graces, where each voice in turn takes up the initial phrase, *Pastor gentile.*

Act III, scene 9. A charming chorus for three voices—*Dormite, begli occhi*—which reminds one of Grétry's *Cephale et Procris.* (See Goldschmidt's *Studien.*)

[3] *Volkommener Kapellmeister,* 1739.

of trios in opera—an honour which up to now has been awarded to Lully. Understanding—after Grétry's own kind—permeates the whole of Luigi's work. It is sometimes a bad counsellor for him, and makes him seek out descriptive or imitative effects, which are misplaced in a tragic situation, such as that where the humming of spinning-wheels depicts the Fates.[1] But Luigi also knows how to express deep emotion; and in spite of his gay Neapolitan soul and the love of fashionable prettiness and elegance which we feel running through his music, he is capable of putting into the mouth of Orpheus phrases of so moving a simplicity that they call up the great voice of Gluck.[2]

. . . . . .

VI

LUIGI ROSSI AFTER "ORFEO"

The name of Luigi Rossi was not celebrated as a dramatic musician in the seventeenth century, even with those who loved him best; he was known as a court poet, and as the author of cantatas and love-songs. Brossard, who was well informed and admired Luigi, does not even mention *Orfeo*. But

[1] Act III, scene 1. The comic and the pathetic intermingle here very curiously. Aristeus, mad with grief, sings a comic trio with Momus and the Satyr (Act III, scene 4). There are a number of comic airs in *Orfeo*, fairly well contrived, which are forerunners of the *opera bufa* of the eighteenth century.

[2] See the musical supplement.

Luigi seems to have fascinated the musicians of his time by the beauty of his form; and they praised the classic perfection of his style, which held nothing of pedantry or archaism.[1] His bold freedom and grace was the side of his genius which struck historians most.[2] Such a man must have pleased French artists and been pleased by them.

Although we have very few details of Luigi's life, we know he stayed a few months in France, where he was on excellent terms with our artists. One of Dassoucy's sonnets expresses wonder at his gift of disarming jealousy:

" Je ne m'estonne point de voir à tes beaux airs
Soumettre les démons, les monstres, les enfers,
Ny de leur fier tyran l'implacable furie.
Le chantre Tracien dans ces lieux pleins d'effroy
Jadis en fit autant; mais de charmer l'envie,
Luiggy, c'est un art qui n'appartient qu'à toi."[3]

His airs were sung by the most celebrated French virtuosi, by Nyert, Hilaire, and Lambert; and their style pleased Luigi so much that he took a dislike to his own Italian virtuosi, and even said to Saint Évremond that he could not bear to hear them sing

[1] " The famous Luiggi Rossi was one of the first men to give Italian airs a clever as well as a graceful turn, which makes them still admired by connoisseurs of to-day " (*Catalogue de Brossard*, 1724).

[2] Burney, in his *History of Music*, remarks the elegance of his airs, their modernity, and their harmonic boldness.

[3] I am not astonished that your beautiful airs have captivated demons, monsters, Hades, and the unrelenting anger of their proud ruler. A Thracian singer once did as much in places of terror; but to charm jealousy, Luigi, is an art which none knows but you.

his music.[1] He was especially fond of Nyert, and wept with joy when he heard him.[2]

These things have their importance; for the foundation of French opera had its prelude in *salon* music and concert-room songs. "It is through song," says Menestrier, "that the music of action and the theatre has been found, after having been sought so long with so little success. There are several musical dialogues by Lambert, Martin, Perdigal, Boisset, and Cambert, which have served, so to speak, as sketches and preludes to the music that was being sought with such difficulty."[3] And Luigi contributed to that discovery as much by his airs for the court as by *Orfeo*.[4]

Among our own musicians, Luigi especially admired Antoine Boësset, director of music for Louis XIII, who died a few years before the production of *Orfeo*, and who wrote the chief ballets in the preceding reign. Luigi brought his beautiful airs back to an honoured place, although it was

[1] "*Solus Gallus cantat.* . . . Luigi could not bear the Italians to sing his airs after having heard M. Nyert and Hilaire and the little Varenne" (*Lettre sur les Opera*).

[2] See Nuitter and Thoinan. De Nyert had been taught, nevertheless, in a school at Rome, where he was in 1630 (see Tallemant des Réaux's account, *De Nyert, Lambert, et Hilaire*). It was to Nyert that La Fontaine dedicated his famous letter against Opera.

[3] M. Henri Quittard has just published some of these Dialogues in the *Bulletin français de la S. I. M.* (May 15, 1908.)

[4] "As a matter of fact, I have not found any music among his manuscripts which was not written to an Italian text; and unless something fresh is discovered, nothing authorizes us to say, as Signor Ademollo has said, that Luigi was the first to write songs to French words for French artists."

then the fashion to despise them.[1] He was also quick to appreciate the perfection of our instrumentalists and their instruments—the lutes, harpsichords, organs, and even French violins.[2] In short, he seems to have become half French in taste, perhaps even a little too much so; for a passage from Saint-Évremond says, "He was very shocked at the hard coarseness of the greatest masters in Italy after he had felt the tenderness of feeling and neat style of our Frenchmen."[3]

This may lead us to think that French influence only helped Luigi to incline the development of his natural gifts to preciosity, to the detriment of the richest qualities in his soul and in art. What is certain is that the Italians eyed him very doubtfully when he returned to them. "On his return to

[1] "He did not think much of our songs, except those by Boisset, which he admired" (*Lettre sur les Opera*).

"Boisset's airs, which had once charmed the whole court, were soon neglected in favour of other little ditties. It was Luigi, the first man in the world in his art, who taught Italy to admire them, and made us ashamed of neglecting them, and gave back to them the honour that a mere whim had taken away" (Saint-Évremond, *Observations sur le goût et le discernement des François*).

This great artist, of whom Luigi made so flattering an exception among French musicians, and whom certain distinguished amateurs of the seventeenth century, such as Maugars, Lecerf de la Viéville, and Bacilly, compare with the Italian masters as representing the best in our own national art—this great artist still awaits a study which shall bring his genius to light.

[2] "He admired the concord of our violins, our lutes, our harpsichords, and our organs . . ." (Saint-Évremond).

[3] This could not apply to the sad need of French singers to "pronounce their words better," which was recognized by Lecerf de la Viéville. Tallement, in his remarks on Nyert, says that it was due to the Italians that he learnt "what was good in their way of singing"; and that before Lambert and himself, no one knew in the least how to pronounce his words properly.

Italy, all his musician compatriots showed themselves to be his enemies, repeating openly in Rome, what he himself had said in Paris, that to make music agreeable one must have Italian airs in the mouth of a Frenchman."[1]

Towards the end of 1647 he was about to leave Rome. He hoped to make a fresh sojourn in France, but political events stopped him, and he died at Rome on February 19, 1653.[2]

Despite Saint-Évremond's assertion, Luigi had not really lost his popularity in Italy. The dedication of the *Cantate morali e spirituali* by Giacomo Antonio Perti (Bologna, 1688), which I referred to before, shows that the best Italian musicians of the time of Alessandro Scarlatti had quite as high an opinion of him as Saint-Évremond and the court of Anne of Austria.[3]

Luigi's fame also reached England, where it probably came by way of Saint-Évremond, who

[1] Saint-Évremond, *Lettre sur les Opera.*

[2] My learned friend, M. A. Wotquenne, has brought to my notice the following passage from Pitoni (*Notizie de' contrappuntisti e compositori di musica*): "Luigi Rossi, Neapolitan: A great number of his cantatas, operas (*commedie*) and *canzoni* are still sought for to-day by foreigners. He died in 1653, and was interred in S. Maria in the Via Lata at Rome, where one may read the following eulogy: "Aloysio de Rubeis Neapolitano phonasco toto orbe celeberrimo, regnis regibusque noto, cujus ad tumulum Armonia orphana vidua amicitia aeternum plorant, Joannes Carolus de Rubeis sibi fratique amantissimo cui cor persolvit in lacrimas sepulchrum posuit anno MDCLIII" (Collection La Fage, mss. Number 266).

His brother, Carlo Rossi, remained friendly with Mazarin. He was interested in the performances of *Ercole amante*, and probably came to Paris in 1661.

[3] "I have tried," says Perti, "to follow as best I can the greatest lights of our profession—Rossi, Carissimi, and Cesti. I have taken as escort these three great souls. . . ."

had been established in London since 1670, and through Hortensia Mancini, the countess Mazarin, who arrived at the English court in 1675, became a favourite of Charles II, and helped to establish Italian and French Opera in London. Collections of Italian airs, published about this date in London, contain airs by Luigi.[1]

How was it that the name and works of Luigi so quickly fell into oblivion in France? Well, there is no exact reason for it; but mention ought to be made of the fact that in an old Catalogue of Music in the Bibliothèque Nationale, written in the eighteenth century, there is a note against the name of Luigi to the effect that Lully's jealousy persecuted him and obliged him to leave France. I cannot either prove or deny that assertion; unhappily, it is probably true, when one thinks of Lully's jealous and rather unscrupulous character. On the other hand, Cambert is not any more trustworthy; for in his dedication of the *Peines et Plaisirs de l'Amour*, in 1672, he boasts with Perrin that he was "the inventor of opera"; and in a letter published with the *Pastorale* of 1659, they speak of Italian music as "plainsong and cloister airs, which we call songs of the hurdy-gurdy or ricochet, and music of the gutter." There is not a word about Luigi and *Orfeo*, but there is a scornful allusion to "the performance in France, as well as Italy, of Italian comedies in music, which it has pleased the composers and executants to disguise under the name of

[1] Among others, a *Scelta di canzonette italiane di diversi autori*, dedicate all' eccellentissimo Henrico Howard, duca di Norfolk, e gran marescial d' Inghilterra. Printed in London by A. Godbid and J. Playford, in Little-Britain, 1679.

opre, so that (I am told) they may not pass for comedies." And Perrin adds that "they did not please our country." People had short memories.[1]

It is an act of justice for us to repair that harmful neglect, and to stir up the memory of this great Italian artist, who was the first founder of Opera in France. And the better one knows him, the more he shows himself as one of the most important masters in the history of dramatic music of the seventeenth century.[2]

[1] Some remembered him, however; among others, La Fontaine and his friend De Nyert, who were not forgetful of *Orfeo* at the time of Lully's noisy success:

"Toi qui sait mieux qu'aucun le succès que jadis
Les pièces de musique eurent dedans Paris,
Que dis-tu de l'ardeur dont la cour échauffée
Frondoit en ce temps-là les grands concerts d'*Orphée*,
Les passages d'Atto et de Leonora,
Et ce déchaînement qu'on a pour l'Opéra ?"

(*Épître à de Nyert*, 1677.)

(You, who know better than others the success that musical pieces formerly had in Paris, what do you say to the warmth with which the excited court of that time praised the fine concerts of *Orpheus* and the passages between Atto and Leonora, and to the passion now felt for Opera ?)

[2] Since the first edition of *Musiciens d'Autrefois*, M. Alfred Wotquenne, the librarian of the Royal Conservatoire of Music in Brussels, has published an *Étude bibliographique sur le compositeur napolitain, Luigi Rossi*, Brussels, 1909. It contains a thematic list of 167 cantatas or *canzoni* for a solo voice, 28 for two voices, 22 for three voices, 3 for four voices, 5 motets, and a *passacaille* (slow chaconne) for the harpsichord. M. Wotquenne has brought to light the expressive beauty, melodiousness, and rhythm of Rossi's cantatas. Some of them are highly developed, in two and three parts, with alternate recitative and *arioso* form. Several of them make allusion to political events; to the death of Charles I of England, to the death of Gustave-Adolphe, and to the war between France and Piedmont. The most remarkable of these works may be found in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.

M. H. Prunières has completed M. Wotquenne's Bibliography in his *Notes bibliographiques sur les cantates de Luigi Rossi au Conservatoire de Naples* (Bulletin de la Soc. Intern. de Musique, January 1913).

NOTES ON LULLY

I

THE MAN

He had a clever but vulgar face, and heavy eyebrows. "His eyes were dark and red-rimmed, and so small it was difficult to see them, while they, apparently, had difficulty in seeing,"[1] though they sparkled with a malicious humour. His nose was fleshy, with spreading nostrils; his cheeks heavy and lined, and puckered with wry folds. He had thick lips, and when he was not jesting his mouth wore an obstinate and disdainful expression. His chin was full and cleft, and his neck was thick.

Paul Mignard and Edelinck try to ennoble him in their portraits, and make him thinner and give him more character. Edelinck makes his appearance like that of some great nocturnal bird of prey. Of all those who painted him, the sincerest seems to have been Coysevox, who has not troubled about making a show portrait, but simply depicted him as he was in ordinary life, with his neck and chest uncovered, slovenly in appearance and sullen in expression.[2]

[1] Sénecé, *Lettre de Clément Marot touchant ce qui s'est passé à l'arrivée de J.-B. Lully aux Champs-Élysées* (Cologne, 1688).

[2] "A little man, unpleasant enough in appearance, and very untidy in dress" (Sénecé).

Lecerf de la Viéville was careful to correct the flattery of his official portraits :

> " He was both fatter and smaller than the prints would lead us to believe, though in other ways they are like enough ; that is to say, he was not good-looking, and had nothing noble about him ; but his expression was whimsical and lively. He was also dark, with little eyes, a big nose, a large mouth, and a sight so short that he could scarcely see when a woman was beautiful."[1]

. . . . . .

[1] *Comparaison de la Musique italienne et de la musique française* by Lecerf de la Viéville de la Fresneuse (Brussels, 1705).

This work consists of a set of six dialogues between people of distinction, who meet together at a provincial performance of Campra's *Tancrède*, and sometimes in one another's houses.

These enthusiastic amateurs discuss the respective merits of French and Italian music ; and that is their pretext for a justification of Lully. At the time of these conversations they are already a little way off their hero, who has been dead for eighteen years. Only the oldest among them has seen Lully. The generation who knew him is about to vanish, and with it will go many precious memories. They know this ; and one among them says :

" Take advantage of these gentlemen's memories. Now is the time to gather up particulars . . . they are growing old already ; in a few years they will be lost. You shall perpetuate them, and your hero's name shall be beholden to you."

Thus the book is, by the intention of the author, a gathering up of aural tradition about Lully, through conversations at court, and the gossip of musicians. That is why I shall frequently quote from its pages in these Notes ; for though everything in the book may not be meticulously exact, it at least reflects the public opinion of that time and the picture formed of Lully. It was doubtless a flattered picture, since the author is a mad enthusiast about Lully ; but it is a living picture in which it is not difficult to discover the man himself.

Lecerf de la Viéville has been made use of by nearly all those who have written about Lully after Lecerf's time. But they

Lully's morals we know, sadly enough. We know that with all his talent he only reached his exceptional position by sordid intrigue, and a mixture of buffoonery and flattery, which gained him, quite as much as his music, the protection of the king. We know by what tricks—shall we say by what perfidy?—he supplanted Perrin and Cambert, the founders of French opera; and how he betrayed Molière, whose friend and companion he was.[1] It was well for him that Molière died suddenly; for Lully would never have come out victor in the fight in which he so rashly engaged. Later on, he was happily not called upon to meet such fierce adversaries; but he committed the fault of treating unkindly even those whom he thought inoffensive, and they rendered his hurts with interest. I am thinking at present of Guichard and La Fontaine, whose biting satires must have put him in the pillory. Guichard was a competitor Lully tried to get rid of by accusing him of attempted poisoning. Guichard, however, did not take the trouble to prove his perfect innocence, but published some terrible pamphlets about Lully instead. La Fontaine, upon whom Lully had played a trick, by asking him for a poem for an opera and then refusing it, avenged himself by putting Lully's

have very often made no mention of the fact in their impudent borrowings. Such are, Boscheron, in his *Vie de Quinault* (1715); Titon du Tillet in his *Parnasse françois* (1732); and the Prevost d'Exmes in his *Lully musicien* (1779).

[1] The story is too well known to tell it again here; and I refer the reader to an excellent book by Nuitter and Thoinan called *Les Origines de l'Opéra français* (1886).

portrait into a wicked little masterpiece called *Le Florentin*:

" Le Florentin
Montre à la fin
Ce qu'il sait faire.
Il ressemble à ces loups qu'on nourrit, et fait bien ;
Car un loup doit toujours garder son caractère,
Comme un mouton garde le sien. . . ."[1]

I do not know if Lully was the wolf; but the sheep was certainly not La Fontaine; and it would be folly to believe all the spiteful things dictated by his wounded vanity. But La Fontaine was an "*homme de lettres*," and capable of much when his self-respect as an author was at stake. He admitted this himself in his *Épître à Madame de Thianges*:

" Vous trouvez que ma satire
Eût pu ne se pas écrire.
. . . .
J'eusse ainsi raisonné si le ciel m'eût fait ange,
Ou Thiange ;
Mais il m'a fait auteur, je m'excuse par là.
Auteur qui pour tout fruit moissonne
Quelque petit honneur qu'un autre ravira.
Et vous croyez qu'il se taira ?
Il n'est donc pas auteur, la conséquence est bonne."[2]

[1] The Florentine
Shows at length
What he is made of.
He reminds me of a wolf that has been made a pet;
For a wolf keeps his own nature,
As a sheep keeps his. . . .

[2] You find that my satire
Need never have been written.
. . . . . .
So should I have reasoned if Heaven had made me an angel,
Or a Thiange ;
My excuse is that I was made an author—
An author, who, for his work
Reaps a little honour which another steals away.
And you think he will be silent ?
If that is the case, he is not an author.

More than that, he offered Lully the poem of *Daphné*, to set to music, and was willing not only to retract his taunts, but to sing his praises as well.

" Si pourtant notre homme se pique
D'un sentiment d'honneur, et me fait à son tour
Pour le Roi travailler un jour,
Je lui garde un panégyrique.
Il est homme de cour, je suis homme de vers ;
Jouons-nous tous deux de paroles ;
Ayant deux langages divers.
Et laissons les hontes frivoles.
Retourner à *Daphné* vaut mieux que se venger."[1]

This avowal, in its candid cynicism, puts us a little on our guard concerning the unkind imputations of so perfect an " author."

With Lecerf de la Viéville, it is another matter :

" Lully had a good heart, but was more like a Lombard than a Florentine. He was neither deceitful nor spiteful ; his manners were agreeable and friendly ; and he was without arrogance, and would meet the least of musicians on terms of equality, though he was of blunter speech and less gracious in manner than is usual with a man who has lived a long time at court."

[1] If, however, our man rises
To a sense of honour, and gives me, in my turn,
A day's work for the King
I have a panegyric for him up my sleeve.
He is a courtier, I am a poet ;
Let us both keep our word,
Each in our own language ;
And let us leave shameful frivolities.
A return to *Daphné* is better than revenge.

And he did as he said. " The reconciliation was so complete and so sincere," says Walckenaer, " that La Fontaine suppressed his satire, and it was only printed after his death. He then wrote two dedications in verse for Lully : one for the opera *Amadis*, and the other for the opera *Roland*."

It is possible that when Lecerf knew Lully, he showed himself more of a good fellow; for he was then a successful man and had no longer any need to trick people. People of his kind, provided they do well, bear a grudge against no one. A man who had risen from lowly birth, and who had so many insults to wipe out before he made his fortune, was proof against all humiliation. He had something else to do but think of his enemies; he had himself to think of.

Lully was extremely ambitious. It was not enough to be absolute master of the whole world of music—he must get himself ennobled and be made secretary to the King. This was not accomplished without difficulty; and the story of his efforts is well worth reading in La Viéville's account, for there we have a good picture of his impudent tenacity. To Louvois, who waxed indignant at such pretensions in one who, he said, had no recommendations and had done no service except that of having caused a laugh, Lully replied:

> "'You would do as much for yourself if you could!' The retort was a cool one; and there was no one in the kingdom but M. le maréchal de la Feuillade and Lully who would have dared to reply to Louvois in that way."

However, Lully had the last word, and was made Secretary to the King.

> "The day of his reception, he offered the old courtiers and important people of the court a

dish of his own making—an Opera. There were twenty-five or thirty people present that day, who were entitled to the best places. The chancellor and his staff were there in a body—two or three rows of serious-looking men, in black cloaks and beaver hats, in the first rows of the gallery, listening to the minuets and gavottes of their brother musician with an admirable air of gravity."

The saucy ambition of this great plebeian artist was accompanied by justifiable pride, and Lully felt himself to be the equal of the noblest. And his demand for the rights of genius was a foreshadowing of Gluck, whom Lully resembles in many ways.

Like Gluck, Lully understood the all-powerfulness of money in modern society, and his head for business was the means of getting him a large fortune. His posts of Superintendent of Chamber Music and music-master to the Royal family are estimated to have brought him thirty thousand francs. His marriage, in 1662, with the daughter of the celebrated Lambert, music-master of the court, brought him a dowry of twenty thousand francs. Besides this he had the receipts from the opera and exceptional honorariums from the king. He conceived the idea of investing the greater part of his money in projects to make a new suburb on the Butte des Moulins.[1] He did not consult a business man in the matter, but did all his own

[1] The old name of the Quartier Saint-Roch, which had a double ridge of ground formed by the accumulation of the refuse of Paris.

work, and, as M. Edmond Radet has shown,[1] worked out calculations, negotiated purchases of land, superintended building operations, and settled terms with the workmen. He never let any one do things for him. In 1684 he was the proprietor of six buildings which he had had put up, in which he let apartments and shops. At Puteaux he had a country house with a garden, and a second one at Sèvres. And finally he set about purchasing a lordly estate, the county of Grignon, for which he bid sixty thousand pounds above the First President. That gave offence; and a letter of the time laments that such things should be possible:

> "We have come to a pretty pass when a mountebank has the temerity to purchase such estates! The riches of men of his kind are greater than those of the highest ministers of other European princes."[2]

At his death[3] he left fifty-eight sacks of louis d'or and Spanish doubloons, as well as silver plate, precious stones, diamonds, real and personal property, charges, pensions, etc.; in all worth about eight hundred thousand francs, and equal to two million francs to-day.[4]

[1] In a singular book called *Lully homme d'affaires, propriétaire et musicien* (1891).

[2] Letter from an unknown person to Cabart de Villeneuve (quoted by M. E. Radet).

[3] According to the inventory of his goods, which was made in 1687.

[4] Add to this the Opera receipts, which brought him in thirty thousand francs a year, and his post as advisor, which was sold for seventy thousand francs; also the reversion of fees

His fortune and his titles did not turn his head at all. There was no risk of that. It was not in him to play the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* and to display his vanity for the benefit of noble lords. He amassed wealth for himself and not for others. That was what was least easily forgiven him :

" C'est un paillard, c'est un mâtin
Qui tout dévore,
Happe tout, serre tout, il a triple gosier.
Donnez-lui, fourrez-lui, le glou[1] demande encore ;
Le Roi même aurait peine à le rassasier. . . ." [2]

" He was a mean person. The courtiers called him *' le ladre '* (the scurvy fellow), not because he did not invite them often enough to his table, but because he gave them to eat without profusion. He used to say that he did not wish to be like those people who made a marriage feast every time they entertained a noble lord, who would scoff at them directly their backs were turned. There was good humour in his meanness." [3]

At heart he was not miserly. He knew how to spend with advantage ; especially when paying respect to the court.[4] He spent better still when

belonging to his musical offices, and the income from the sale of his compositions, which was estimated at seven or eight thousand francs a year. M. J. Écorcheville reckons the whole amount at about seven million francs in present-day value.

[1] La Fontaine calls him " le glouton."

[2] He is a rake, a cur,
Devouring everything,
Nabbing everything, grasping everything, with triple gullet.
Cram and stuff him—the glutton asks for more ;
The king himself would have trouble in sating him.

[3] Lecerf de la Viéville.

[4] At the time of the treaty of Nimeguen he had fireworks let off in front of his house in honour of the peace and of the

he wished to give himself any pleasure. He led a merry life. Lecerf says that "he inclined to wine and the table like a rather dissolute Frenchman, but he inclined to avarice like an Italian." His debauchery in company with the chevalier de Lorraine was known to all; and this open profligacy, in which even some of his admirers find the explanation, if not the excuse, of a certain carelessness in his work,[1] contributed perhaps to his premature death.

All these things did not prevent him from being a family man at times. He divided his life into two parts; but up to the end he knew how to remain on very good terms with his wife, and he had a great regard for her and for his father-in-law, Lambert.[2]

king. On the birth of the duke of Burgundy he gave a free performance of *Persée* to the Parisians, "with every possible comfort."

[1] One of Lecerf's characters criticizes a passage from *Amadis*, and the chevalier replies: "My poor friend, Lully, is Lully, as M. de la Bruyère has said; but he was a man, though a man given over to pleasure."

[2] "A good husband?" asks Lecerf. "Not bad," is the reply. "He always called Lambert father-in-law."

In reality Saint-Évremond insinuates that if Lully had lost his wife, he would not have made as much clamour about it as Orpheus:

"On t'aurait vu bien plus de fermeté
Que n'eut Orphée en son sort déplorable:
Perdre sa femme est une adversité;
Mais ton grand cœur aurait été capable
De supporter cetter calamité.
En tout, Lully, je te tiens préférable."

(We should have seen a firmer man in you
Than in Orpheus in his unhappy fate:
To lose a wife is a misfortune;
But your great heart would have been able
To bear up under such a calamity.
And on the whole, Lully, I find you preferable.)

He gave him the use of a suite of rooms in his house in the Rue Sainte-Anne; and he helped him to get a country house at Puteaux. He had so much confidence in his wife's wisdom that he gave his money into her care;[1] and in his will it was to her, and not to his sons or followers, that he left the absolute control and management of his work—the Opera.[2]

This clever man found means, when dying, of making an edifying end. As you know, towards the end of 1686, Lully was conducting a *Te Deum* in the church of Les Feuillants in the Rue Saint-Honoré, on the occasion of the king's convalescence, when he struck himself violently on the foot with the stick he used for beating time. A small abscess formed on the little toe, and the wound for want of proper attention became gangrenous, and so caused his death on March 22, 1687, at fifty-four years of age. As long as there was a hope of recovery he kept his malicious spirit, as may be seen in anecdotes about him of a more or less authentic nature. One of these represents him trying to cheat heaven itself. His confessor, says the story,[3] would only consent to give him absolution on condition that he threw into the fire all that he had written of his

[1] " For his smaller pleasures he took the money gained from the sale of his books—an income of some seven or eight thousand francs, and he let his wife look after the rest " (Lecerf de Viéville).

[2] " Wishes that the aforesaid lady, his wife, shall manage all that concerns the aforesaid Academy of Music or Opera, without any exception or reserve."

[3] Told by Lecerf. Whatever truth may be in this story (which was related immediately after Lully's death), it reflects the opinion his contemporaries had formed of him.

new opera, *Achille et Polyxène*. Lully submitted to this verdict in a Christian spirit, and gave the score to the confessor, who forthwith burnt the diabolical manuscript. Lully seemed to be better. One of the princes who came to see him then learnt this edifying fact :

> " ' What ! Baptiste,' he said, ' you have thrown your opera into the fire ? Good Lord ! were you fool enough to believe the idle talk of that Jansenist, and go and burn your fine music ? '
>
> " ' Gently, sir, gently,' whispered Lully. ' I knew what I was about—I had another copy.' "

Shortly after this he had a relapse.

> " This time the thought of his inevitable end gave him a noble remorse, and made him say and do the finest possible things ; for the Italians are masters in the niceties of penitence, as in other matters. Lully had transports of penitence fitting to his country. He donned sackcloth and ashes and made honourable reparation. . . ."[1]

His pompous epitaph in the church of Saints-Pères says :

> " God, who had given him a greater gift of music than any other man of his century, gave him also, in return for the inimitable chants he composed in His praise, a truly Christian patience

[1] Lecerf adds that " when he got back to bed, he composed a comic air on ' Thou must die, sinner, thou must die.' " But as Lecerf himself does not seem very sure of the truth of this, we will share his doubt.

in the sharp pain of the illness of which he died . . . after having received the sacraments with resignation and edifying piety."

II

THE MUSICIAN

With all his vices, this crafty person, this arch-knave, this miser, this glutton, this rake, this cur—whatever name his companions were pleased to call him—with all his vices he was a great artist and a master of music in France.

The " King's Music," of which the superintendent had the management, was divided into three departments : the Chambre, the Chapelle, and the Grande Ecurie. The Grande Ecurie was composed of nothing but instrumentalists, and formed the company of musicians for hunting, and processions, and fêtes in the open air. The Chambre comprised divers virtuosi, a band of twenty-four violins (or Grand Band) which played at the king's dinners, concerts, and court balls ; and also " The Little Violins," which accompanied the king on his journeys and voyages.[1] The Chapelle was, at the beginning of the reign, almost exclusively concerned with vocal music.[2]

[1] For great occasions the two bands of violins and the Grande Ecurie were united under the conductorship of the superintendent. Lully was, from 1652, " Inspector of Instrumental Music," and from 1653, " Composer to the Chambre," a post he had succeeded to after its vacation by the Italian, Lazzarini. In 1661, he succeeded Jean de Cambefort as Superintendent of the King's Music.

[2] It included fourteen singers, eight children, and a player on the horn (serpent). There is no mention of an organist. The Chapelle sang masses and motets for four, five, and six

These were the musical means that Lully had at his disposal. He doubled their power by combining what had been kept separate up till then; and the Chapelle and the Chambre thenceforth aided one another, by introducing the instrumental and vocal methods of the theatre into the religious music at Versailles,[1] and by even giving a stately and triumphal character to the amusements of the Chambre, all of which accorded well with the king's taste.[2] Besides this he enlarged his own musical

voices, without instrumental accompaniment, under the direction of two deputy choirmasters, who were on duty for six months at a time. (See Michel Brenet, *La Musique sacrée sous Louis XIV*, in the *Tribune de Saint-Gervais*, February–April, 1899.)

[1] After the nomination of Henry Dumont in 1663 as deputy, there had been an attempt to make innovations in the Chapel Royal. An organ was introduced and one or two violins or viols. But it was especially in the king's household and at the court at Versailles that the spirit of things changed. Lully introduced his company of singers and instrumentalists, and himself furnished models of a new style. He wrote noble psalms for eight or ten voices for two choirs and a complete orchestra —true religious operas, or dramatic cantatas, including solos, airs, duets, trios, choruses, and symphonies, of a grand and often stirring character, though they were hardly of a religious nature. (See M. Brenet, *ibid.*, and H. Quittard, *Henry Dumont.*) All this side of Lully's genius merits an essay to itself, as well as his singularly fertile and brilliant activities in the matter of court ballets and other royal diversions. But it is not my intention to deal with this side of him in these Notes, but rather to sketch the part he played in the history of musical tragedy.

[2] "Il faut vingt clavecins, cent violons pour plaire.
. . . . . .
Ses concerts d'instruments ont le bruit du tonnerre
Et ses concerts de voix ressemblent aux éclats
Qu'en un jour de combat font les cris des soldats."
(La Fontaine, Épître à M. de Niert.)

(One must have twenty harpsichords and a hundred violins to please.
His instrumental concerts make a noise like thunder,
And his vocal concerts resemble the deafening cries of soldiers on a day of battle.)

domain enormously, by annexing a new musical province, which was to become at once very important—the province of Opera. And of that province he constituted himself a sort of hereditary fief, by securing the exclusive right to enjoy it during his life; and after him it was "to pass to any of his children who should be appointed and recognized to the reversion of the office";[1] and he fortified his powers by Draconian interdictions, and safeguarded himself against all rival endeavours[2] by the recognized right of being able to establish Schools of Music in Paris, wherever he judged necessary for the advantage of the Academy, and even by the right of having his music and his poems printed according to his liking. Thus he arrogated to himself a monopoly of music. No one could stand up against him. He crushed all possible rivals,[3] and by every available means established

[1] Letters Patent of March 12, 1672, authorizing Lully to establish in Paris a Royal Academy of Music, "to give performances of musical compositions accompanying verses written in French or in a foreign tongue."

[2] "Prohibitions against any one performing compositions of more than two airs and requiring more than two instruments, without the permission in writing of M. Lulli" (1672). An order of April 30, 1673, forbade actors to make use of more than two voices and six violins, etc.

[3] Among others, the authority of his old enemy, the Confraternity of Saint-Julien-des-Menestriers, which had for long acted as a check on the King's Music, and which at one time, under the "King of Violinists," Guillaume Dumanoir, would have swallowed up its rival, if it had not been for the intervention of the superintendent, Boësset. The Confraternity attacked Lully, and tried to contend with him for the monopoly of the education of its violinists. But misfortune fell upon it, and Lully defeated it through an unjust decision in 1673. The "King of Violinists" officially resigned his fancied royalty the same year. (See J. Échorcheville's *Vingt suites d'orchestre*

unity of government and unity of style in French musical art, which had been so brilliant, but so anarchical, before his coming. He was the Lebrun of music, but more absolute than he, for his domination lived on after his death.

What efforts of will must this little Florentine peasant have exercised to arrive at such a position; for his début in art had been a very humble one.[1]

He just knew how to sing and play the guitar when he arrived in France, at the age of twelve or thirteen, with the chevalier de Guise. A Franciscan friar had been his only master. Later on, when he had become famous, he still played the guitar:

> "If he saw one, he would amuse himself with it and strum it to death, and he got more music out of it than others could. He composed a hundred minuets and a hundred *courantes* for it, but did not collect them."[2]

At Paris, while in service, he discovered a new talent, and amused himself by scraping a violin. The comte de Nogent heard him, and gave him lessons. He rapidly became one of the finest violinists of his time.

> "He played divinely. Since the time of Orpheus, Amphion, and those other gentlemen,

du XVII^e s. français, 1906; and Schletterer's *Geschichte der Spielmannszunft in Frankreich und der Pariser Geigerkönige*, Berlin, 1884.)

[1] He was born in Florence, November 29, 1632. M. Henry Prunières has just discovered the record of his baptism. The duc de Ferté, when at the house of the grand duke in Florence, saw an old gardener who was either his uncle or his cousin and who bore his name.

[2] Lecerf de la Viéville.

no one had drawn such sound from a violin as Lully. . . . But he had already put away his violin for several years before he became lord of the Opera. From the day that the king made him superintendent, he ignored the violin so completely that there was not one in his house. He seemed as if he wished to free himself from the subjection of the instrument, and as if he would rather discard it altogether than play it badly. People used often to beg him to play a little air; but he refused great lords and the companions of his debauches alike; neither from shyness nor politeness, but because he would not be known as anything but a great master. The Maréchal de Grammont was the only person who found a means of making him play. He had a footman called La Lande, who afterwards became one of the best violinists in Europe. At the end of a meal he begged Lully to hear the man and to give him just a little advice. La Lande came and played, and doubtless did his best. Lully, however, could not help hearing that he had played some of the notes wrong. He took the violin from his hand, and having once begun, he went on for three hours; and he warmed to the music and left off again with reluctance. . . ."[1]

His talents as a violinist were so universally recognized, that his playing in time became a by-word. When Mme de Sevigné wished to praise a virtuoso extravagantly, she said, "He plays the

[1] Lecerf de la Viéville.

violin better than Baptiste." It was through the violin that Lully's good fortune began. He was admitted first of all into the king's Grand Band; then was commissioned in 1652 to make a general inspection of the king's violinists, and was given the direction of a new band formed by himself—that of the *Petits Violons*.

But his ambitions went higher still. "Having recognized," says an account of 1695, "that the violin was beneath his genius, he gave it up, and devoted himself to the harpsichord and the study of musical composition under the teaching of Métru, Roberday, and Gigault, the organist of Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs."[1]

It may seem surprising that the creator of French Opera should have three organists for his masters. But, as M. Pirro says, the school of organ in France was then a school of musical eloquence—"the lan-

[1] "Reasons which manifestly prove that composers of music or musicians who use the harpsichord, lute, and other instruments of harmony, have never been and never will be of the community of the ancient jugglers and fiddlers of Paris," 1695 (Bibl. Nat.).

Nicolas Métru of Bar-sur-Aube was choirmaster of the Jesuit church in Paris. François Roberday, of Paris, was valet to Queen Anne of Austria, and afterwards to Queen Marie-Thérèse; he was later organist of the Petits-Pères, and died in 1682. Nicolas Gigault of Paris was born about 1625 and died about 1707; he was organist of Saint-Martin-des-Champs, Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs, and the hospital of Saint-Esprit. He had the honour of being, not only Lully's master, but also, just before his death, Rameau's judge in an organ examination, in 1706.

M. A. Guilmant has published in the *Archives des Maîtres de l'orgue des XVI^e, XVII^e, and XVIII^e siècles*, two collections of organ music by Gigault and Roberday, together with some excellent reviews by M. A. Pirro.

guage of the organ was like an oration."[1] It was in this school that Lully learnt the elements of the rhetoric of which he was a master. Moreover, these organists wrote for all kinds of instruments; and they were learned in symphonic music.[2] Gigault and Roberday had broad tastes and inquiring minds. Roberday loved things Italian, was an enthusiast for Frescobaldi, and acquainted with Cambert, with Bertalli (the music-master of the emperor), and with Cavalli, an organist like himself.[3] He must have known something of the first experiments in Italian opera in France. Gigault, whose eclecticism favoured Titelouze, the old organist of Rouen, quite as much as Frescobaldi, took his model from singing. It was the time when Nivers was urging organists "to study methods of singing"; for he said the organ ought to imitate the voice.[4]

Both Gigault and Roberday had a certain "bold-

[1] *Cérémonial* of Paris, drawn up by Martin Sonnet in 1682.

[2] Gigault's *Livre des Noëls* and Roberday's *Livre d'Orgue*, published by M. Guilmant, explain in their prefaces that they are written for the harpsichord, lute, viols, violins, and flutes, as well as for the organ. Gigault's name was registered on the roll of "companions who teach dancing and the playing of instruments." He probably gave concerts at his own house. Roberday took part in 1671 in a concert of one hundred and thirty musicians at the church of the Petits-Pères. The instruments were violins, hautbois, trumpets, kettledrums, and organ.

[3] During Cavalli's stay in Paris, Roberday, who was then publishing his *Livre d'Orgue* (1660), asked Cavalli for a subject for a fugue, "so that his book might be honoured by the name of this master."

[4] Written in 1665.

ness in using dissonances";[1] and M. Pirro reminds us that one of the traits most admired in Lully by Frenchmen of his time was his skill in employing "false harmonies."[2]

There was no doubt that Lully profited by the example of his illustrious predecessors at court, the composers of the royal ballets,[3] masters who, for the last twenty years, had sought to make a musical poem of the *Air de cour*, giving it an expressive character, as his father-in-law Lambert had done, and making it a finished model of fine French song. In examining a book of Lambert's airs one is struck

[1] See a curious example by Gigault, published by M. Pirro, in the *Revue Musicale* of October 1, 1903—a progression in sevenths, with fifths as an alternative or embellishment.

Roberday in his preface to the *Livre d'Orgue* himself makes a bold claim for the liberty of art in matters of academic rules. "There will be found in this work," he says, "a few places where the composition may seem rather daring to those who rely upon the old rules and think they should always be observed. But it should be remembered that music was made to please the ear; and so if I allow that a composer should never step outside the canons of his art, it should be agreed also that that which is pleasant to the ear in music is within the rules of music. It is therefore the ear we must consult."

This declaration, so full of good sense and wholesome realism, was not lost upon Lully.

[2] "From these dissonances," say Perron and Titon du Tillet, "he got the finest effects in his compositions, by the art with which he prepared them, and introduced them, and resolved them."

A quite relative daring! When Bononcini's music began to be known in France at the end of the century, Lully's admirers made loud outcry: "Dissonances enough to make one shiver! Harshness carried as far as it will go. . . . It is unbearable. Happy are those who have ears of lead!" (Lecerf de la Viéville, *Éclaircissement sur Bononcini*, 1706.)

[3] Compare H. Prunières' essay in the *Année musicale*, 1913, on Jean de Cambefort, and the recitatives of this forerunner of Lully in the court ballets.

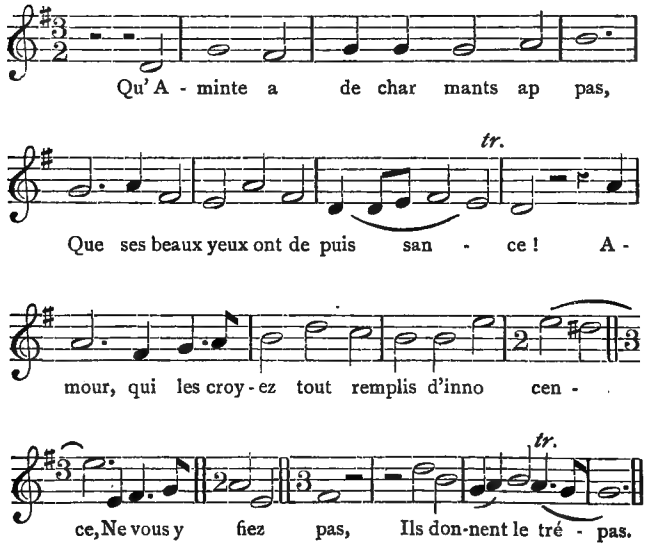
by the similarity between his style and Lully's. Here are the same melodic models, the same formulas for declamation in singing, fashioned less after the observation of nature (for they are often artificial and affected) than on the French fashion of the day. There is the same alternation of three and four time in the same phrase, the same elegant and conventional ease, the same worldly truth—may one say? Who would not be tempted to attribute an air of Lambert's like the following to Lully?[1]

[1] *Airs de Boësset, Lambert, Lully, Le Camus*, etc. (Manuscripts in the Bibl. Nat. Res.). *Airs* (printed) *à* 1, 2, 3, *et* 4 *parties avec la basse continue, par MM. Boësset, Lambert, Lulli*, 1689, Ballard.

See also Lambert's air, *Pour bien chanter d'amour;* or *Je goûtais cent mille douceurs;* or his songs on popular sentiments, founded on vaudeville melodies and dance rhythms.

M. Quittard has published an interesting essay on the style of Lambert's *Dialogues*, in the *Bulletin français de la S. I. M.* (May 15, 1908).

or this air of Boësset's :



Boësset was one of the greatest of Lully's French precursors, and offered him admirable examples of dignified pathos and noble melancholy in music. Certain of his fine airs with their broad style of declamation are an early model of the great lyrical monologues in *Amadis* and *Armide*, and are the foundation of the Louis XIV style in music.

Besides these French masters, Lully was in communication with some of his most celebrated compatriots, and especially with the Venetian, Cavalli. Cavalli's musical genius was much greater than Lully's, and it dominated the whole of Italian opera writers in the seventeenth century (not excepting Monteverde himself).[1] He came to Paris and produced *Ercole* in 1662; and was then in his full glory. Lully was only making his début as a musical composer; and two years previously had arranged the production of Cavalli's *Serse* for the French stage, and written some ballet music for it. How could he escape the influence of such a powerful collaborator, even temporarily? It is true he could never have attained to Cavalli's richness in music, nor to the vigour of his feeling and strange power, which foreshadowed the advent of Händel and Gluck.[2] But Cavalli's *vis comica*,[3] his gift of picturesque vision, and intensity of feeling, must

[1] See Hermann Kretzschmar, *Die Venetianische Oper* (*Vierteljahrschrift für Musikwissenschaft*, 1892); and Romain Rolland, *L'Opéra populaire à Venise* (*Mercure musical*, January 15, and February 15, 1906).

[2] Medea's incantation in *Giasone*, 1649.

[3] *Ibid.* The part of Demo.

have struck Lully as much as the freshness of his pastoral visions.[1]

He may have been also acquainted with some of the compositions of the Florentine Cesti, choir-master to the emperor. There had been at the beginning of Louis XIV's reign constant emulation between the courts of Paris and Vienna; each seeking to surpass the other in magnificence and the excellence of their artists. Cesti was certainly well acquainted with French taste.[2] He was idle and very gifted, a much more refined musician than Lully, a poet of elegiac emotions, and also one of the creators of comedy in music; and yet he wrote certain kinds of overtures and symphonies and instrumental sonatinas and prologues to opera which are quite in Lully's style. And the same with his airs; for though generally of a different style, one may find among them recitative melodies, the

[1] Cavalli wrote a whole series of scenes of Sleep, which may have inspired Lully. I cannot help thinking that he must have known, among others, one called *Eritrea* (1652) and Celinda's delicious air, *Dolce sonno, amico nume* (Act I, scene 19) with its lullaby accompaniment on three viols. See also the pastoral scene of Praesitea in *Ercole*, and the choruses that follow, *Dormi, dormi, o sonno.*

The musical construction of Cavalli's *Ercole* shows elsewhere many resemblances to Lully's future operas; among others, the importance of the symphony, the fugal nature of the overture, the bold and irregular rhythms, the structure of the Prologue, the choruses and dances at the end of the acts, the songs with dance rhythms, and the combination of three and four time in the same song. One must remember, however, that Cavalli in the above work adapted himself somewhat to the prevailing taste in France.

[2] He follows, quite consciously, certain French methods of instrumentation (*Serenata* of 1662). It is likely he travelled in France about 1660.

form of which is repeated, and recurs with the same words in the course of the same scene, after the manner of Lully.[1] Thus in *Pomo d'Oro* (1667), Ennone's beautiful plaint calls to mind Reynold's melancholy reproach in Gluck's *Armide*, "*Armide, vous m'allez quitter?*"

And lastly, Lully could scarcely ignore Luigi Rossi, who, twenty-five years before, had brought

[1] In particular in the *Dori* of 1661 and the *Pomo d'Oro* of 1666–7. But we must not forget that if Cesti was at the zenith of his fame when Lully was only beginning his career, Lully's entertainments were already becoming known in Europe, and were copied at other courts because they were a French fashion. An international style was evolved, in which Paris, Vienna, and the Italian towns took the chief part. I am certainly inclined to think that Lully, who was more intelligent than inventive, and better at organizing than creating, was more likely to borrow than to lend.

Italian opera to Paris, and had himself produced one of the best examples of it.[1]

But whatever he may have borrowed from Italian masters, Lully's borrowings always seem to be, not those of an Italian seeking to Italianize the country of his adoption, but those of a Frenchman taking from the art of other countries only what will accord with the spirit of his nation and exactly serve his genius. Lully's thought and style are thoroughly French. So much was he French, and so conservative in spirit, that while the Italians were propagating opera throughout Europe, Lully was its declared enemy until he was forty years of age. No one could have disparaged the early efforts of Perrin and Cambert more pertinaciously than he. Until 1672, the year when he produced his first opera, he maintained (according to Guichard and Sablières[2]) that opera was impossible in the French language. All his ambition was centred on the ballet-comedy in the old French style; and it was only by slow degrees, when enlightened by Perrin's success, as well as Molière's opinions, that he set about founding a lyric theatre in France.[3]

[1] See the preceding essay. I only mention in passing this rather obscure matter of Lully's relations with his French and Italian forerunners. M. H. Quittard's untiring work is daily helping to clear matters up; and M. Henri Prunières is about to devote a chapter to the subject in a work he is now writing, called *Esthétique de Lully*.

[2] The authors of the opera *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*, given at Saint-Germain-en-Laye, in 1672.

[3] It seems that Molière, who was more interested in the relationship of music and comedy than any other great dramatic author of his time, was the first to think of depriving Perrin of the sole prerogative of Opera. He confided his scheme to

This he decided to do unaided, and keep the glory of it for himself.

But from the day of his decision no one could have entered into the spirit of the new art with keener intelligence, or devoted more energy and perseverance to it. From 1672, the date of the inauguration of his operatic theatre, to 1687, the date of his death, he wrote and produced a new opera every year.

. . . . . .

Lecerf de la Viéville tells us :

> " He produced one opera a year, and he took three months to write it. He applied the whole of his energies to it and worked with extreme assiduity. The rest of the year he did little to it; except for an occasional hour or so at nights when he could not sleep, and on mornings which he could not spend in pleasure. He kept his mind always fixed, however, on the opera that he was evolving or had just evolved, and if anyone happened to learn what he was singing at any time, it always proved to be an extract from the opera on hand."

We need not be astonished at his spending only three months out of the twelve on composition ; that was but part of his work, for he had, not only the production, but its interpreters to think of.

The first business was to secure a poet ; for in

Lully, who hastened to appropriate the idea by first turning Molière out of the business altogether.

those days musicians did not aspire to be their own poets. Lully was as capable of writing his own poem as any other, for he was a man of humour and imagination :

> " He had a lively wit and original ideas ; he could tell a story perfectly, though with an exuberance that was more Italian than French. . . . He is known to have written some charming verse, both in French and Italian. All the Italian words in *Pourceaugnac* were of his own composition."

There is no doubt he retouched some of the passages in the poems of his operas. But he had not much faith in his own facility as a poet, and was too lazy to burden himself with heavy tasks. So he sought and found an author—Quinault.

We will not say that it was a happy choice. But it was not a haphazard choice, for Lully exercized his intelligence in it, and picked out from among greater poets one whose art was best suited to Lully's own music ; and he gave him his exclusive favour, in spite of the remonstrances of nearly all the clever men of his time. In reality, he fashioned his poet, and made him, so far as future generations were concerned, the poet of the impressive and impassioned *Armide*.

It is not my intention to study Quinault and his work here. He was, as Perrault says, one of those happy geniuses who succeed in all they undertake :[1]

[1] *Les Hommes Illustres*, 1696.

" He was tall and well made, with languishing, prominent blue eyes, fair eyebrows, a large smooth forehead, a long face, a good nose, and an agreeable mouth; he had a great deal of character, and a manly air, fascinating manners and a gentle and enthusiastic spirit. In writing and speech he was very apposite; and very few people could equal the charm of his intimate conversation."[1]

He was a clever lawyer, a distinguished orator, an auditor in the Chamber of Accounts, a prolific author (being capable of writing as many as three comedies and two tragedies in a year), and a perfect man of the world.

" He was agreeable without insincerity, seeing good in all things, speaking ill of no one, especially of the absent, and yet never palliating their faults. All of which brought him a great many friends and no enemies. He had the secret of making himself universally loved."[2]

The sweetness of his character may be judged from the fact that in spite of Boileau's bitterness towards him, Quinault himself never owed him a grudge; more than that, he sought him out and

[1] Boscheron, *Vie de Quinault*, 1715.

[2] " His dominating passion," continues Boscheron, " was that of love; but he always conducted his affairs with so much skill, that he might boast with justice that he had never made a *faux pas*, whatever others might have done. No one could display more understanding in *a tête-à-tête*. . . ."

May we not apply the same criticism to Lully's operas?

became his friend.[1] Boileau himself admits the perfect sincerity and exceeding modesty of the man who was for so long his victim.

All these traits of character—his astonishing facility and adaptability in work, which, like Lully, allowed him in business and art to have several things on hand at once; his sweetness and agreeableness, which would make him the docile instrument of a strong will—all these qualities destined him to be Lully's choice; for Lully was in search of a mechanic and not a partner for his work.[2]

One may well call it *work*, for it was no light matter to serve Lully. He secured Quinault as his poet, says Lecerf, and he guaranteed him four thousand francs for each opera,[3] provided he was his employé.[4]

> "Quinault used to seek out and arrange several subjects for opera. Then he took them to the king, who chose one. After this he wrote out a plan of the design and progress of the piece; and

[1] Boileau wrote: "Monsieur Quinault, despite all our poetic quarrels, died my friend" (*Réflexions critiques sur quelques passages de Longin*).

[2] There is reason to believe also that Quinault owed this choice as much to the preference of the king as to that of Lully. He was, before Racine's time, the best writer of love tragedies, which were the delight of the young court and the annoyance of Corneille (see the preface to *Sophonisbe*). His first collaboration with Lully was in *Psyché* (1670). Beginning with *Cadmus et Hermione* (1673) he was the only acknowledged poet of Opera until 1686, with the exception of the years 1678 and 1679, when Lully set to music Thomas Corneille's *Psyché*, and Thomas Corneille's and Fontenelle's *Bellérophon*.

[3] Besides two thousand francs promised by the king.

[4] "This great man whom he hired," says J. J. Rousseau.

gave a copy of this plan to Lully, who added, according to his fancy, diversions, dances, and little songs by shepherds, mariners, and such like. Quinault then fashioned the scenes and showed them to the French Academy."[1]

He showed them, in particular, to his friend Perrault; and people thought to be well informed said that he also took counsel with Mlle Serment—a young girl whom he loved and who had a good deal of intelligence.[2]

"When Quinault returned, Lully put no confidence in either the French Academy or Mlle Serment. He examined the poem word by word, though it had already been reread and corrected; and he added more corrections, or cut the poem down if he thought it necessary; and there was no gainsaying his criticism! In *Phaéton* he made Quinault change whole scenes twenty times over, although they had been approved by the Academy. Quinault made Phaëthon extremely hard-hearted, and some of his speeches to Theone were quite insulting. That made all the more for Lully to scratch out. Lully wished Quinault to make Phaëthon ambitious, but not brutal. . . . When M. de Lisle (Thomas Corneille) wrote the words of *Bellérophon* he was driven to despair by Lully. For the five

[1] Lecerf de la Viéville.

[2] See Lecerf and *Menagiana*. Boscheron says, however, that he did not make her acquaintance until he was working at *Armide*.

or six hundred verses contained in that piece, M. de Lisle was obliged to write more than two thousand."

So you see the kind of supremacy the musician held over the poet. And it was not only words or situations that had to be altered, but sometimes even the characters themselves. In fact, the obedient poet was not unlike an assistant of the great painters of that time, who did not paint the whole of their pictures, but allowed some of the work to be done by others under their direction.

If Lully inflicted much hardship on the poet, at least he recognized the worth of such a collaborator, and remained obstinately faithful to him, in spite of the efforts made to break his allegiance.

"A certain number of people, both clever and distinguished, not being able to endure the success of Quinault's poems, began to pretend they were bad, and tried to make other people believe the same. One day when these people were supping together, they came to Lully at the end of the meal, each bearing a glass; then putting the glasses to his throat, they shouted, 'Give up Quinault, or you are a dead man!' This jest caused much laughter; and when it had subsided the company began to speak seriously on the subject, and said all they could to give Lully a distaste for Quinault's poetry. But they did not succeed."[1]

[1] From Boscheron. It was Quinault who ceased writing for Opera from religious scruples. He began by writing a poem

If Lully preferred this collaboration, even to that of Racine, it was not because Racine was unwilling to give his aid ;[1] it was rather because Quinault was more likely to translate Lully's musical ideas into verse. Lully was so sure of his collaborator's aptitude in understanding him and of his docility in following him, that in certain cases he wrote his music before he had seen the poem.

> " In the matter of diversions in the piece, he composed the airs first of all. Afterwards he made a rough sketch of verses for them ; and indicated what he wanted for airs with movement. He would then send the papers to Quinault, who wrote verses to fit his purpose."[2]

. . . . . .

called *L'Extinction de l'Hérésie*. Lully sought by all means in his power to win him back. But he failed, and had to turn to Campistron, who wrote for him *Acis et Galatée*, and *Achille et Polyxène*, for which he had only time to finish the first act. The two faithful collaborators quickly followed one another in death ; Lully died on March 22, 1687, and Quinault on November 29, 1688.

[1] Racine would have consented very readily. Refer to Boileau in his Preface to *Prologue d'Opéra*. There you will see that Racine agreed to write Lully an opera called *La Chute de Phaéton*, and that he wrote some of it and recited it to the king ; and that Boileau consented to write the Prologue, and indeed did part of it. If the project came to nothing, it was not due to Boileau and Racine. It was because, Boileau says, " M. Quinault went to the king with tears in his eyes, and told him of the affront he had just received." And the king, touched with compassion, took the subject away from Racine and Boileau, and gave it to Quinault. One sees here it was no fault of Lully's that Racine was not his librettist. Later on, Racine wrote the *Idylle sur la Paix* for Lully, which was set to music in 1685.

[2] Lecerf de la Viéville.

Let us see Lully at work after he had approved of a scene.

"He read it through until he knew it by heart. Then he sat down to his harpsichord, with his snuff-box beside him, and sang the words over and over again,[1] banging the keys, which were covered with snuff and very dirty, for he was an untidy man. When he had finished singing, the music was so fixed in his head that he could not forget a note of it. A secretary, Lalouette or Colasse, was then called, and Lully would dictate to him. The next day he would have forgotten all about it. He went through the same performance with the symphonies with words; and on days when Quinault brought him nothing, he worked at airs for the violin. If he sat down to work when he did not feel in the humour for it, he often left it. He would get up at night and go to the harpsichord; and whatever house he was in, he would leave it directly if an inspiration seized him, for he never lost a favourable moment."[2]

Another anecdote shows us the true musician, one who knew how to find inspiration from the noises about him, and heard melodies in Nature's own rhythms—the foundation of all music.

"One day he went riding; and the trotting of

[1] "He had a bass voice, but it was thin," says Lecerf. Even when he was old he still enjoyed singing his airs.

[2] Lecerf de la Viéville.

his horse gave him the idea of an air for the violin."[1]

Lully was always watchful of Nature :

> " When he wished to write a thing naturally, he always went to Nature ; he made Nature even the foundation of his symphonies, and was glad to adapt her to his music."

In making allusion to a celebrated scene in *Isis*, Lecerf tells us that on a winter's day in the country he himself was struck by the realism of Lully's musical descriptions.

> " When the wind howled and blew through the doors of a great house, it made a noise like the symphony of Pan's lamentation."

The imitation of declaimed speech, the imitation of the rhythms of the voice and of things, the imitation of Nature—all these were Lully's realistic sources of inspiration, and the instruments with which he worked. We shall presently see the use he made of them.

If Quinault could not write a poem without getting everyone's opinion about it, the same was

[1] *Ibid.* The same thing is recounted of Beethoven. One day, having seen a horseman galloping under his window, he improvised, it is said, the *allegretto* of the pianoforte Sonata, Op. 31, No. 2, in D minor. " Many of his finest thoughts," says Czerny, " were born by a similar chance. With him, all sound and all movement became music and rhythm."

not true of Lully; for he neither consulted the Academy nor his mistress :[1]

"He went to no one for help or counsel in his search for information. He was even possessed by a dangerous impatience, which would not allow him to listen to other people's arguments. He vowed that if anyone told him his music was worthless, he would kill the maker of such a remark.[2] Such a failing might lead one to suspect him of vainglory and presumption, if

[1] If Quinault had Mlle Serment, Lully had Mlle Certain, a pretty harpsichord player. But he did not allow her to interfere with his work.

"Certain, par mille endroits également charmante,
Et dans mille beaux arts également savante,
Dont le rare génie et les brillantes mains
Surpassent Chambonnière, Hardel, les Couperains.
De cette aimable enfant le clavecin unique
Me touche plus qu'*Isis* et toute sa musique.
Je ne veux rien de plus, je ne veux rien de mieux
Pour contenter l'esprit, et l'oreille, et les yeux. . . ."

(La Fontaine : *Épître à De Niert*).

(In a thousand ways, all equally charming, and in a thousand fine arts, all equally learned, her rare genius and her dazzling hands excel those of Chambonnière, Hardel, and the Couperains. Played by that charming child, the harpsichord moves me more than *Isis* and all its music. I want nothing more, nor nothing better, to content my spirit, my ears, and my eyes. . . .)

It may be seen that on this point Lully agreed with La Fontaine. But it is amusing enough to reflect that the sly Florentine conquered the rival set up against him. Mlle Certain (or Certin) was very young at the time when La Fontaine wrote his *Épître*; she was then one of De Niert's pupils, and not more than fifteen years old. "Later," says Walckenäer, "after Lully had developed her talents, she became famous through the fine concerts which she gave at her own house, and to which the cleverest composers brought their music."

[2] Furetière; quoted by Lecerf.

one did not know from other reasons that he had neither. He must have gone astray, nevertheless, in many places in his work."

But he never admitted that he had been advised; he only allowed he had been assisted. As an artist, he was idle and vain, despising hard work; and he often got assistance in the matter of filling in his harmonies:[1]

"He himself wrote all the parts of the principal choruses, duets, trios, and quartets. But outside this important work he only put in the treble and the bass of his score, leaving the counter-tenor, the tenor, and the fifth, to be filled in by his secretaries, Lalouette and Colasse."[2]

Whatever we may think of these methods to-day, they were in accordance with the spirit of the time; nor were the other arts any better, and Lully only imitated the ways of the great painters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, who did not trouble to finish what they had sketched, and established in their houses regular factories for

[1] See the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* for the manner in which the music-master sets about composing a serenade:

The Music Master (*to his pupil*): "Is it done?"

The Pupil: "Yes."

The Music Master: "Let me see it. Yes; that's good."

The Dancing Master: "Is it something new?"

The Music Master: "Yes; it is an air for a serenade, which I have just made him compose, while waiting for our man to wake up. . ."

The master here at any rate gives credit to his pupil.

[2] Lecerf de la Viéville.

pictures. Nevertheless, Lully looked upon himself as the sole author of his work, and woe betided anyone who had the presumption to pass himself off as his collaborator! He was like Michelangelo, who turned out the companions who helped to cast the bronze statue of Julius because they boasted that the statue was by Michelangelo and themselves. Lully dismissed Lalouette because "he had been giving himself the airs of a master, and boasted that he had composed some of the best pieces in *Isis*."

When his opera was written, Lully went to sing and play it to the king. "The king wished to have a foretaste of his works"; but no one else was allowed to know anything about them before that.[1]

. . . . . .

A work was by no means finished when the writing was done. It had to be produced; and this was not the least fatiguing part of the business. Lully was not only a composer; he was also director of the Opera, conductor of the orchestra, stage-manager, and director of the schools of music from whence the cast was recruited. He had everything to get together: the orchestra, the chorus, and the singers; and he did it all himself.

In the matter of the orchestra, he was helped by three good musicians: Lalouette, Colasse, and

[1] "The comte de Fiesque was the only exception, and he was allowed to read and sing some parts of it; and was always very discreet about the matter."

Marais,[1] who conducted under his direction. He presided at the choosing of the executants—or rather he was sole judge.

"He would have only good instrumentalists. He tested them first by making them play *Les Songes funestes* from *Atys*.[2] He supervised all the rehearsals; and he had so nice an ear that from the far end of the theatre he could detect a violinist who played a wrong note. And he would run up to the man and say, 'You did that. It is not in your part.' The artists knew him, and they tried to do their work well. The instrumentalists particularly never dared to embellish their parts; for he would not allow any more liberties from them than he would from the singers. He thought it far from proper that they should assume a greater knowledge than his own, or add what notes they pleased to their tablature. If this happened, he got angry, and would make

[1] Jean-François Lalouette (1651–1728), a good violinist, was choir-master of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois and of Notre-Dame. He wrote cantatas and motets. Pascal Colasse of Rheims (1649–1709) was Master of the Chamber Music, and composed several operas. Marin Marais (1656–1728) was a renowned virtuoso on the bass viol. He also wrote operas, and one of them, *Alcyone* (1706), was famous.

M. Pougin thinks that, in the early days at any rate, Lully had his harpsichord in the Opera orchestra, as he had in Molière's theatre.

[2] Lecerf adds: "It was a nimble hand that he demanded. You see ease of execution was a reasonable qualification."

This observation makes one think that in Lecerf's day Lully's time was already being taken more slowly. The choice of the page out of *Atys* was not a bad one, for it needs firm precision in attack, a quality that Lully esteemed above all others.

lively corrections. More than once he broke a violin on the back of a man who was not playing to his taste. But when the rehearsal was at an end, Lully would send for the man, pay him three times the value of his instrument, and take him out to dine. Wine would calm his anger; and if one man was made an example of, another might gain a few pistoles, a meal, and some useful information."[1]

By this severe discipline Lully at length got together the best orchestra of his time in Europe. It is perhaps an exaggeration to say he was the first man to train an orchestra in France, and that before him (according to Perrault) musicians did not know how to play from a score, and had to learn their parts by heart. But he certainly did improve instrumental execution, especially in the violins; and he created traditions in the conducting of

[1] Lecerf de la Viéville. These musicians in the orchestra on whom Lully vented his anger were not, however, poor wretches. Some among them were good performers and even distinguished composers. The violinist Marchand wrote a Mass which was played at Notre-Dame. The bass-viol player, Théobalde, wrote an opera called *Scylla*, which was produced in 1701. The flautist Descoteaux was a friend of Boileau, Molière, and La Fontaine; he thought himself a philosopher, and La Bruyère, it is said, drew his portrait in a sketch called *De la Mode*, under the name of "Fleuriste." People have sought to recognize the other flautist, Philbert, in La Bruyère's portrait gallery, under the mask of Dracon, the virtuoso beloved by ladies. (See a series of interesting articles by M. Arthur Pougin, published in *Le Ménestrel*, in 1893, 1895, and 1896, on *La Troupe de Lully*.) It would seem that among the violinists was also Rebel (father of Jean-Ferry Rebel, and Anne Rebel, who married Lalande), and Baptiste (father of Baptiste Anet), both ancestors of famous artists in the next century.

orchestras, which rapidly became classic, and were followed in France and even served as a model in Europe. Among the many foreigners who came to Paris to study under him was an Alsatian, Georges Muffat, who especially admired the perfect discipline and strict time of Lully's orchestra.[1] He said that Lully's method was characterized by trueness of tone, by smoothness and evenness of execution, by clean attack, and by the way the bows of the whole orchestra bit into the first chord,[2] as well as by the irresistible " go," the well-defined rhythm, and the agreeable combinations of vigour and flexibility, of

[1] Prefaces to the two parts of the *Florilegium*, an admirable collection of instrumental pieces published in 1695 and 1698. This work has been recently republished in the *Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Oesterreich*, and Herr Robert Eitner has published Muffat's detailed notes on Lully's orchestra in his *Monatshefte für Musikgeschichte* (1890–1891).

[2] It was the famous " *premier coup d'archet* " (first stroke of the bow), whose tradition was famous during the whole of the eighteenth century, though Rousseau and Mozart laughed at it. It must have been something like the " *attaque à la Weingartner.*"

" The sound of our *premier coup d'archet* rose to the skies with the plaudits of the audience " (*Lettre d'un symphoniste de l'orchestre*, J.-J. Rousseau).

Mozart wrote to his father (June 12, 1778, Paris) :

" I did not miss *le premier coup d'archet.* What a fuss those asses make about it. Good heavens ! I see nothing special in it. They begin well together, as they do in other places. It makes one laugh. . . . A Frenchman at Munich said to D'Abaco :

" ' Monsieur, have you been to Paris ? '

" ' Yes.'

" ' What do you think of the *premier coup d'archet ?* Have you heard it ? '

" ' Yes, I heard the first stroke and the last.'

" ' What do you mean by the last stroke ? '

" ' Don't you understand ?—the first stroke and the last. And the last gave me the greater pleasure of the two.' "

grace and vivacity. But of these qualities the best was the rhythm.[1]

Lully took even greater pains with the singers than he did with the orchestra. It was matter of making both good musicians and good actors. Part of his caste came from Perrin and Cambert's company;[2] but the most famous of his artists—with the exception of the bass, Beaumavielle—were discovered and trained by him.

"From the moment that he had discovered singers he liked," says Lecerf, "he interested himself in their training to an extraordinary extent."

"He himself taught them how to enter and walk about the stage, and how to be graceful in gesture and action. He began their education in a room; and instructed Beaupui in this way how to play the character of Proteus in *Phaéton*, showing him every gesture. To the rehearsals

[1] "*Scharfe charakteristiche Rhytmik*," as Robert Eitner says—an incisive and expressive rhythm. But Lully thought quite as much of delicacy of expression, and many marks on his scores emphasize this point; such as: "Play softly . . . almost without touching the notes. . . . Do not take off the mutes until you are told to. . . ."

[2] Perrin and Cambert had some difficulty in recruiting singers from Paris and the provinces, especially in Languedoc. From Toulouse came Beaumavielle, who played Lully's great bass parts—Alcides, Jupiter, Pluto, and Roland. From Béziers came Clédière, who played the counter-tenor parts—Atys, Theseus, Bellerophon, Admetus, and Mercury. Several of Lully's best actresses made their début in Cambert's operas or in the court ballets. Such were Marie Aubry who played Sangaride, Io, and Andromeda; and that excellent tragedienne Mlle de Saint-Christophle, who played Medea, Alcestis, Juno, Cybela, and Ceres. (See the articles before referred to by M. Arthur Pougin.)

only necessary people were admitted—the actors, the poet, and the machinist. He assumed the right of rebuking and instructing the actors and actresses; and he would stare at them with his hand above his eyes, so as to aid his short sight, and would not overlook anything that was badly done."

He took a great deal of trouble, but did not always succeed. He had to turn out La Forest, who had a splendid but rough bass voice. He undertook to train it, and he tried after the manner of a bird-trainer with a bird. He let La Forest play the small part of Roland, and wrote the part of Polyphemus for him. But after five or six years of labour, La Forest was still so stupid that Lully saw he was only wasting time on him, and he dismissed him. If he sometimes made these miscalculations, he had at least the joy of making some of the finest singers of the century. There was Duménil, a former scullion, who became, as M. Pougin says, the Nourrit of the seventeenth century. He had to teach him everything; and he gave him patient instruction for many years, making him at first sing little parts, and afterwards more important ones, until he was at last a perfect interpreter of all his great tenor parts—Perseus, Phaëthon, Amadis, Médor, and Reynold. Then there was the famous Marthe de Rochois, the glory of the seventeenth-century lyric stage—"the greatest artist," says Titon du Tillet, "and the most perfect model for declamation that has ever been known on the

stage." Colasse discovered her in 1678, and Lully trained her. She was little, slight, very dark, and not at all nice-looking, though she had beautiful black eyes and an expressive face. Her voice was slightly hard, but she had great force of feeling, unerring judgment, quick intelligence, and in gesture and bearing a regal dignity. She made an incomparable Armida, and the memory of it lived all through the eighteenth century. Her mimic art was a model for the Comédie-Française actors; and people particularly admired "the way she interpreted what was called the *ritornella*, which is played while an actress enters and comes forward on the stage, when, as in a play without words, she must in silence let her feeling and passion show itself on her face or in her actions."[1]

All Lully's great singers were also great actors. Beaumavielle was a powerful tragedian, Duménil a perfect actor, and Clédière's dramatic talents were scarcely less than his; while Saint-Christophle and Le Rochois seem to have equalled the most celebrated actresses of the Comédie-Française in nobility and tragic passion. Lully's opera was a school of declamation and dramatic action; and in that school he himself was master.

Is that all? Not yet.

> "He took almost as great a share in the dance as in anything else. Part of the ballet, *Les Festes de l'Amour et de Bacchus*, was composed by

[1] See Marpurg, *Historisch-kritische Beyträge zur Aufnahme der Musik*, Berlin, 1754.

him ; and he played a part nearly as important as Beauchamp's in the ballets of the operas that followed. He improved the entrances, and imagined expressive steps to suit the subjects ; and when there was need of it, he would caper before his dancers to make them better understand his ideas. He had, however, never learnt dancing, and so only danced by fits and starts. But his habit of watching dances, and his extraordinary genius for everything belonging to the stage, caused him to dance, if not with great good breeding, at least with a very charming vivacity."[1]

. . . . . .

Such was the enormous burden which this little man heaped on his own shoulders. There was not a single department in the empire of Opera which he did not direct and keep under his master eye. And in this world of the theatre, so difficult to manage that it annoyed every musician and director of the Opera in the eighteenth century, not one of his pupils dared to flinch. Nor did anyone presume to rebel against this little Italian sprung from nobody knew where, this kitchen drudge who jabbered French.

" He had considerable authority over the whole musical republic. First of all through his talent, his offices, his riches, his favours, and his influence. He had two maxims which brought him the

[1] Lecerf de la Viéville.

submission of this musical world (which is ordinarily to its leaders what the English and Poles are to their princes)—he paid splendidly, and he allowed no familiarity. He was probably liked by the actors; for he would sup with them and be on terms of good friendship. But he would not have joked with the men, and he never had a mistress among the women of his theatre."[1]

This precaution was necessary for anyone who meant these ladies to be virtuous, or at least, as Lecerf says, to have the appearance of virtue:

"He was careful to preserve the good name of his house. The Opera of that time was not hard-hearted, but it was prudent and shrewd."

A story, which has, however, been denied, says that Lully once kicked Le Rochois when about to become a mother, in order to teach her her folly. This brutality may be doubtful, but it was likely enough in Lully's character; and other deeds attest his hardness of heart in any matter that inconvenienced him; for he allowed no lapses in his service:[2]

"I can assure you that under his reign the actresses could not have colds for six months in the year, nor the actors be drunk four days in the week. They had to get used to something altogether different."

[1] Lecerf de la Viéville.

[2] He dismissed his prettiest actress, Louise Moreau, for the same reason. She played Peace in *Proserpine*, and captured the dauphin's heart.

Perhaps Lecerf is a little inclined to exaggerate his hero's power; for the Opera singers often caught cold even in Lully's time. La Bruyère, in a subject called *La Ville*, tells us that Rochois had a cold and was not able to sing for a week. But such colds were perhaps less formidable enemies of art than they were later on; for the actors and their dodges had to contend with an actor greater and more cunning than the whole lot of them put together. We know what sort of anarchy reigned in Opera after Lully's death; but as long as he lived all went well and without any talk.[1]

One may imagine the force of will Lully exercised to maintain a firm control over this crowd of musicians, when one thinks that a century later Gluck had great difficulty in establishing order in the mutinous Opera set, and in bending the capricious minds of the singers and the orchestra to his own strong will. And it is no small praise to Lully to say that Gluck in the greater part of his stage reforms—as well as in many of his artistic ideas—brought back Opera, after a century of anarchy, to the point where Lully had left it.

. . . . . .

[1] "They were obliged to accept any part he chose to give them without dispute" (Lecerf).

III

LULLY'S RECITATIVE AND RACINE'S DECLAMATION

The foundation on which Lully's whole art reposed was the same as that of Gluck, and still more like that of Grétry. All three set tragic declamation before them as their musical ideal. Gluck differed from the others, because his model was ideal tragedy—Greek tragedy, as it was then conceived—while Lully's and Grétry's model was the French tragedy of their time. Grétry went to the French Theatre to study the declamation of the great actors there, in order to transfer it to music.[1] This idea, which he was as proud of as if it had been a personal invention, had already been conceived by Lully. The latter's words are well known :

> " If you wish to sing my music well, you must go to hear Champmeslé."

And Lecerf de la Viéville tells us that he set about constructing his recitative on the tones of Champmeslé.

This was the key to Lully's art ; and it is important to know how French tragedy was declaimed in the seventeenth century.

Literary history has not yet found all the help it might in musical history. Many literary problems would be more easily solved if music were allowed to throw some light upon them. Such a problem,

[1] See page 319.

to take one example, is the question of free rhythms in German poetry, over which people learned in metres are apt to fall out. There is, however, a very simple means of knowing how to scan such pieces of verse: it is to see how they were scanned by the musicians, who were contemporaries and friends of the poets. When we read Goethe's *Prometheus*, or *Ganymed*, or *Grenzen der Menschheit*, which were set to music by his friend Reichardt, we are almost sure of having Goethe's exact declamation. Indeed, Reichardt, who desired to compose nothing, as he himself says, before he had brought his grammatical, logical, emotional, and musical accents into harmony, wrote his *Lieder* down, so to speak, under Goethe's dictation and alongside Goethe's texts, which had been in some cases marked with musical directions. More than that, the comparison of the same poetry, musically accented by musicians of different epochs, all equally intent upon accents,[1] enables us to discover the differences of poetic declamation throughout a century. For musicians have, more or less knowingly, translated the style of the declamation of their own time into music; and through their songs we may still hear the voices of the great actors who influenced them or were their models.

So it is with Lully: his musical declamation evokes the declamation of the Comédie-Française of his time, and in particular that of Champmeslé. On the other hand, what we know of that poetic

[1] For instance, take Goethe's *Prometheus*, which has been translated into music by Reichardt, Schubert, and Hugo Wolf.

declamation explains many characteristics of Lully's recitative. If Lully went to hear and study Champmeslé, so did Duclos, Baron, and their friends at the Théâtre-Français go to study Lully's great actors, especially Le Rochois in *Armide*. In this way there was an interchange of ideas and a reciprocal influence between the two theatres.

Let us now try to find out what Champmeslé's declamation was like.

I will begin by recalling a fairly well-known passage by Louis Racine, in the memoirs of his father's life. His assertions must not, however, be taken quite literally, and I will discuss them as we go along. He says :

" Champmeslé was not an actress by nature. Her possessions were fine looks, a voice, and a good memory ; for the rest she was so unintelligent that she had to hear the words she was to speak, *so that she might learn their tone.* Everyone knows my father's genius for declamation ; and he was able to impart a right instinct for it to anyone who was capable of receiving it. *Those who imagine that he introduced a high-flown singing style of declamation* into the theatre are, I think, in error. People are too apt to judge him by Duclos, a pupil of Champmeslé ; and they forget that when Champmeslé had lost her master she was no longer the same ;[1] for *as she grew old she took to shouting, and so formed an artificial*

[1] It would be truer to say, when Racine had lost his mistress. For Champmeslé died in 1698, before Racine ; and the loss of her master did not, therefore, mean his death ; it means rather the

style among actors. When Baron, after twenty years' retirement, was weak enough to return to the stage, he did not, according to those who had seen him in his youth, play with his former spirit; but he still used the same tones that my father had taught him.[1] As he trained Baron he trained Champmeslé, though with much greater trouble. He used to make her first of all understand the meaning of her verses; then he would show her the proper gestures, and *instruct her in the intonation of the words, which he himself made a note of.* A pupil who was retentive of his lessons, although an actor by art, on the stage appeared to be inspired by nature."

In this quotation, from which a few errors need to be eliminated, I shall emphasize two passages: one which tells us that Racine *instructed* Champmeslé in her intonation and *made a note of his instructions;* and the other which leaves us to infer that *when she grew old and took to shouting* both she and her pupil, Duclos, had a *high-flown and singing style of declamation;* and that also, according to current opinion, this style of declamation was what *Racine himself had introduced* into the theatre. Louis Racine contradicts this opinion, but not in a very decided fashion: he is not sure,

end of their liaison, which would seem to be about 1678, at the time she became acquainted with the comte de Clermont-Tonnerre—" the thunderbolt (*tonnerre*) which uprooted her."

[1] Here Louis Racine seems to have made a mistake, to his father's advantage. Baron had been trained by Molière, and not by Racine.

he is even in some doubt, and so he says: *Those who imagine this are, I think, in error.*

Other witnesses will help us.

The author of *Entretiens galants*, published in 1681,[1] says:

> "The declamation of actors in tragedy is a species of chant, and you will own that Champmeslé would not please us so much if her voice were less agreeable."

Thus before 1680, that is to say before her rupture with Racine, Champmeslé had a singing style of declamation; there is no doubt about it. What sort of chanting was this? Boileau will tell us:

> "M. Despréaux," wrote Brossette, "spoke to us of the style of declamation; and he himself declaimed some passages, *with as much vigour as possible.* He began with a passage from Racine's *Mithridate:*
>
> 'Nous nous aimions . . . Seigneur, vous changez de visage.'
>
> "He threw such vehemence into the last words that I was much affected. . . . He told us that that was how Racine, who recited marvellously well himself, had told Champmeslé to declaim it. . . .He also said that the stage *demanded exaggeration, in voice and declamation as much as in gesture.*"[2]

[1] Quoted by the brothers Parfait in their *Histoire du Théâtre-Français;* and by Lemazurier in his *Galerie historique des acteurs du Théâtre-Français* (1810).

[2] Appendix to the *Correspondance entre Boileau et Brossette,* 1858.

The abbé Du Bos, who is still more exact, gives us Racine's notes on this famous passage from *Mithridate*, which Champmeslé had learnt.[1] He says :

" Racine taught Champmeslé to lower her voice in reciting the following verses, *and to lower it more than the meaning of the verses would seem to need :*

' . . . Si le sort ne m'eût donnée à vous,
Mon bonheur dépendoit de l'avoir pour époux.
Avant que votre amour m'eût envoyé ce gage,
Nous nous aimions. . . .'[2]

so that she could speak the words ' Seigneur, vous changez de visage ! ' on *a note an octave above* the one used for the words ' Nous nous aimions.' *This extraordinary change of voice* in declamation was excellent for expressing Monime's agitation when she perceives her too ready faith in Mithridates, who is only trying to draw her secret from her, and is about to put her and her lover into extreme danger."[3]

One sees here what wide musical intervals, and what leaps of voice Racine and his interpreter used ; and how they sought " vehemence " and " exaggera-

[1] Du Bos says that Racine gave Champmeslé the intonation of the part of Phaedra, verse by verse.

[2] If chance had not given you to me
My happiness would still have depended on him as my husband.
Before your love had given me this token
We loved one another. . . .

[3] Abbé du Bos, *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture*, 1733.

tion " more than truth. Much has been said of Champmeslé's moving voice. That voice was also prodigiously sonorous. According to a firmly believed tradition, cited by Lemazurier, if the box at the end of the theatre had been opened, one would have heard the actress's voice as far as the café Procope.[1]

Such was Champmeslé—the dark Champmeslé, with her round little eyes, with her pleasant, her plain, and " almost ugly " face (as Mme de Sevigné says), with her powerful and moving voice, chanting Racine's verses like a vehement, emphatic,[2] and carefully marked song.

This chanted declamation was characteristic of French tragedy throughout the seventeenth century. " The Italians," says Du Bos, " say that our tragic declamation suggests singing to them, or the declamation of the classic theatre." And in explanation of this comparison, Du Bos says later on: " The dramatic declamation of classic times was like a continuous melody, to which the actors always recited their verses." After which he quotes Cicero's criticism of a tragedy: " *Praeclarum carmen est enim rebus, verbis et modis lugubre.*" And Du Bos adds: " This is how we would praise a recitative from one of Lully's operas."

The comparison is striking. Thus we see the de-

[1] Lemazurier, *Galerie historique des acteurs du Théâtre-Français*, 1810.

[2] Titon du Tillet remarks on Beaumavielle's habit of giving value to his voice by the emphasis of certain sounds—a custom with actors in former times. Beaumavielle played Jupiter and Roland in Lully's operas.

clamation in French tragedy of that time was analogous to the recitative in Lully's operas.

That is what I wanted to get at. And if we remember that Racine produced *Bérénice, Bajazet, Mithridate, Iphigénie,* and *Phèdre,* at the very time when Lully was producing his first operas (that is to say, when he was forming the style of his declamation), and if we also remember that Champmeslé, when making her début, played these same tragedies,[1] " on the intonation of which," Lecerf says, " Lully was to form his own style," then we shall arrive at the conclusion that Lully set about moulding his style on Racine's own intonation and personal declamation, noted down by him for the use of his actress ; and that this declamation must reflect, in many cases, the musical declamation of Lully.[2]

. . . . . .

It is true that Lully did not set Racine's actual verses to music, if we except the *Idylle sur la Paix,* where Lully in Louis Racine's opinion (and consequently in his father's opinion) perfectly interpreted the poet ; and if we also except an attempt made to translate into music a scene from *Iphigénie en Aulide.* The story of the latter is told by François

[1] The first Racine part played by Champmeslé was Berenice, in November 1670. She was then twenty-six years old.

[2] Since this essay was published, my observations have been confirmed and developed by M. Georges Lote in his remarkable essay, *La déclamation du vers français, à la fin du XVII^e siècle* (*Revue de phonétique*).

Le Prévost d'Exmes, according to an account by Louis Racine :

" Lully, mortified by hearing it said that he owed all his success to Quinault's charm, and that he was incapable of composing good music to more energetic words, sat down one day to the harpsichord, and sang these lines from *Iphigénie* to an impromptu accompaniment :

' Un prêtre environné d'une foule cruelle
Portera sur ma fille une main criminelle,
Déchirera son sein, et d'un œil curieux
Dans son cœur palpitant consultera les dieux. . . .'[1]

" The audience believed themselves present at the terrible spectacle depicted by the words, and the intonation that Lully gave them fairly made their hair stand upright."

It is grievous that this particular musical interpretation has not been preserved ; for we have every reason to believe that it was a faithful representation of the intonation of Racine and his actors.

But, with these exceptions, Lully nearly always employed Quinault as his poet, whose style was thought to be sweeter and less virile than Racine's ;

[1] A priest, surrounded by a pitiless crowd,
Shall lay a murderous hand upon my daughter,
Tear open her soft breast, and with curious eye
Consult the gods in her beating heart.

It is curious that this scene from *Iphigénie* should be the same that Diderot, in his *Troisième Entretien sur le Fils Naturel* (1757), proposed as a theme for musical declamation to the reformer of the opera whom he was anxiously awaiting—who was to be Gluck, twenty years later.

with the result that he must have somewhat softened the vigour of Racine's declamation, while still preserving its spirit.

Let us see how he set about it.

Lully's recitative is not a minor part of his work, or a sort of artificial band holding the different airs together, like the string round a bouquet. It is really the heart of his work, and the most important and careful part of it. Indeed, in this century of intellect, the recitative represented the thoughtful side of opera, and was reasoning set to music. It was not listened to with boredom, as it is to-day; for people found great pleasure in it.

> " Nothing is more agreeable than our recitative," says Lecerf de la Viéville; " it is almost perfect. It is a right mean between ordinary speech[1] and musical art. . . . What could give greater pleasure or open an opera better than the beginning of *Persée*?
>
> ' Je crains que Junon ne refuse
> D'apaiser sa haine pour nous. . . .'
>
> " *Armide* is full of recitatives; no other opera has so many; and truly no one finds them too much. . . . It is chiefly by his recitative that Lully overtops our other masters. . . . We may find airs and symphonies elsewhere as good as his own, but his recitative is inimitable. Other masters do not know how to catch that curious method of singing recitative—so full of life, yet without extravagance—which Lully gave his singer. . . ."

[1] By that is meant the ordinary speech of tragedy.

The first law of that recitative was the strict observation of a syllabic style. As M. Lionel de la Laurencie says, " the line of declamation is divested of all melodic vegetation," and " when one compares some of Lully's recitatives with those of Carissimi or Provenzale, one sees that this Superintendent of Music to the King has in some way given Italian technique a thorough cleaning, and thrown out all the weeds which the fashion of *bel canto*, and even of so-called musical taste, had allowed to grow in the monodic garden."

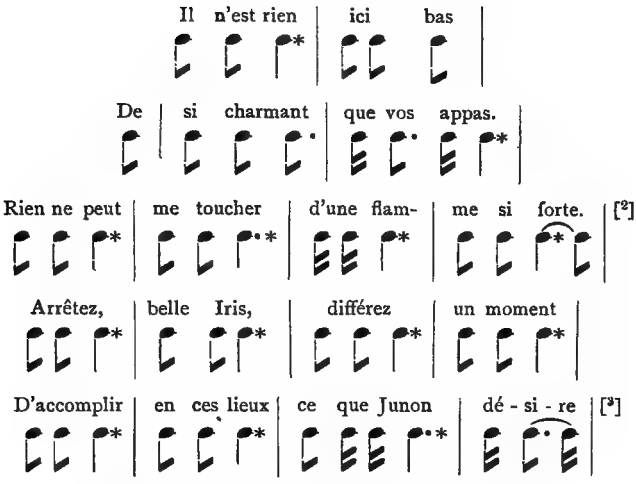
An almost analogous occurrence was taking place in the architecture of the time. Look at an Italian façade of Bernin's school, overcrowded with epileptic figures in floating draperies, agitating their arms, their legs, their bodies, contorting their backbones, suffering from St. Vitus's Dance, and falling into convulsions; and compare this confusion, this garrulity, this perpetual motion, with the simple lines, clean and well defined, of Versailles or the Louvre colonnade. Lully realized in music a like simplification. Italian taste found pleasure in elegant vocalizations, in roulades, in ornamented repetitions, and decorations of every kind. This taste had been accepted in France with the court ballads; but Lully, enlightened by his own good sense, and also by the counsels of such friends as Molière, had rebelled vigorously against the fashion, though he himself was not a prolific composer of melodies, nor troubled by any exuberance of musical inspiration. He disliked writing these repetitions and embroideries, and only put them in

regretfully, at long distances from one another, "out of consideration for the people," as Lecerf de la Viéville says, "and in kindness to his father-in-law, Lambert," who had set the fashion of these ornaments in France. Besides this, he strenuously opposed any attempt on the part of a singer to introduce vocalizations and other ornaments into a song that was written without them, although it was usual at that time to allow singers to add what they liked; it being an essential part of the old art of singing, and especially of Italian art until the middle of the eighteenth century, that part of a song should be reserved for the improvizations of the singer. The musical text in this case was a sort of theme which might be decorated with variations *ad libitum*, so that virtuosity might have full play. But Lully would have none of it; and this was a new departure in musical art.

"Lully," says La Viéville, "sent all his actresses to Lambert, who taught them to sing cleanly. But Lambert would occasionally let them slip some little embellishment into Lully's recitative; and the actresses then attempted to try these decorations at the rehearsals. 'Good gracious!' Lully would say, rising angrily in his chair (only using less polite language), 'there is nothing like that on your paper; and, by heavens! I will not have any embroidery. My recitative is meant to be like speech, and I wish it to be quite unaffected.'"

Lully's recitative then "truly embraces the movements of speech." It especially embraces poetic rhythms, and models itself on the lines of verse;

and in that, we must admit, lies the reason of its monotony. People have praised Quinault's versification, his clever alternation of verses of different lengths, and his care in multiplying or reducing rhythmical accents. But in spite of all his efforts, his declamation when translated into music by Lully is dominated, like all the declamation of that time, by the exaggerated accentuation of the rhyme in short verses, and of the cæsura and the rhyme in verses of twelve syllables. One finds in Lully's operas great steppes of recitatives and airs, where the first beat of each bar falls with unfailing precision on the rhyme, or on the cæsura of the hexameter. The monotonousness of it is terrible; and if Champmeslé declaimed Racine in this way, we should have some difficulty in listening to her to-day without yawning.



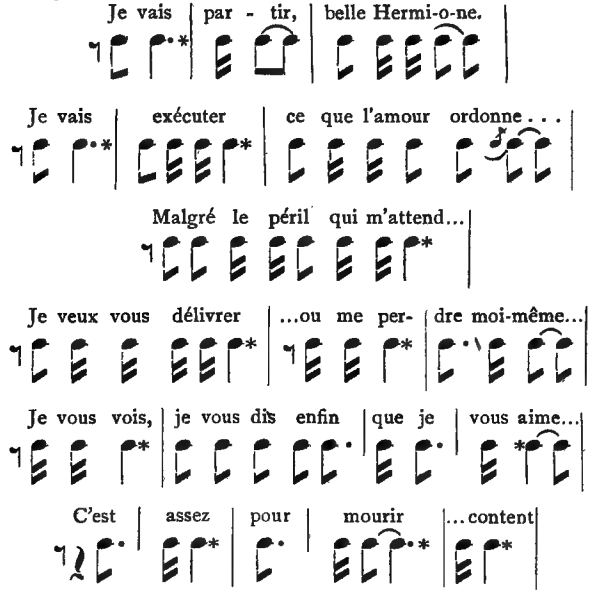
* The starred notes show where the accent falls.

When the monotony of these endless dactyls is combined, as often happens, with a monotony of melodic outline, nothing could be more dull; it is the eternal purring of the classic Alexandrine, the mechanical rhythm of a prayer-wheel.

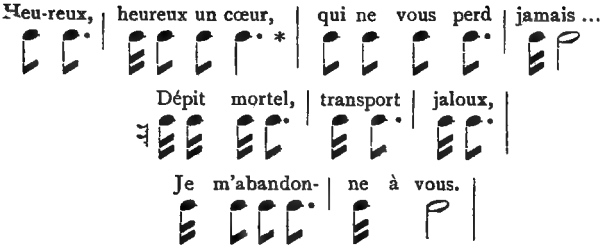
Happily, in some of the scenes the declamation is freer; it springs into life, is interrupted and broken, and finds its rhythm, so far as possible, in the promptings of emotion, yet without disregarding the accentuation of the rhyme and the cæsura. Such declamation may be found in the farewell of Cadmus to Hermione, where it is admirable, and almost unique among Lully's compositions for its

[1] *Atys*, IV. 4. [2] *Isis*, II. 2. [3] *Ibid.*, II. 4.

musical spontaneity. The time is constantly varied; four time alternating with three time; and the melody is not interfered with by the declamation, but goes its own way, and obliges the declamation to linger on certain words (such as "partir" and "mourir") with voluptuous melancholy. The music indeed reflects the emotion of the words very clearly.



Or take the recitative from the famous scenes in *Medée:*



One seems to hear Lully's very breathing in the declamation of this scene, " as if he were reading the poem," as La Viéville says, " until he knew it by heart, singing the words over and over again, while he banged his harpsichord."

It sometimes happens that the dramatic accent is stronger than the ordinary metre of the verse :

But these passages are relatively rare ; and even in exclamations, where the voice has a certain latitude, Lully's method, which is clever enough, is to place the interjection as a syncopation, to slightly delay the time and let it hesitate a moment, but to allow it to take up its monotonous way directly afterwards :

From *Proserpine* we have these two examples :

" Quand on ne voit plus rien qui puisse se défendre. Ah !—. . . qu'il est beau de rendre la paix à l'univers ! "

" Tout y ressent les douceurs de la paix. Ah !— . . . que le repos a d'attraits ! "

It happens very often that the rhyme which ends a phrase, or a sentence, is not only strongly accented, but emphasized still more by its union with a beat of the throat, with a trill. This makes one think of Molière's words, when he railed at the declamation of his verse in the *Impromptu de Versailles :*

> " Note it well. You must lay proper stress on the last verse. That is what will gain you praise, and make people talk."

Rousseau also remarked this absurdity, in his *Lettre sur la musique française.* Criticizing Armida's monologue, he shows us a trill, and, still worse, a complete rest after the first line, although the sense is completed in the second line. And he is annoyed with the uniform drop of the voice at the end of each line—" the perfect cadences, which fall so heavily, and are death to expressiveness." Nothing is truer ; but it is only fair to blame Racine and his actors ; for there is every reason to believe that Lully simply followed the example set by the Théâtre-Français.

. . . . . .

Let us pass from the rhythm of declaimed verse to melodic inflexions.

Here, again, Rousseau sharply criticizes Lully's recitative, and in a wonderfully modern spirit tilts at his model, the Comédie-Française, and uses very similar arguments against it to those which the Debussyites to-day use against Wagnerian song :

" How can anyone conceive that the French language, with its simple, even, modest accent and anything but sing-song tone, can be well rendered by the harsh and noisy intonation of this recitative? And what connection can there be between the soft inflexions of French speech and these long inflated sounds (or rather, never-ending cries), which have an even larger share in this kind of music than the airs? For instance, let someone recitẽ (someone who knows how to) the four first verses about the gratitude of Iphigenia. You would hardly notice the slight inequalities and faint inflexions of the voice in a quiet narrative, which has neither eagerness nor passion in it, and nothing to cause a raising or lowering of the voice. And then hear it declaimed by one of our actresses on the notes of a musician, and listen calmly, if you can, to the extravagant clamour that flies from the heights to the depths, and unmeaningly perambulates the whole register of the voice, dwelling impertinently on the narrative, so as to spin out some finẽ sounds on empty syllables which add nothing to the sense of the whole. And when you add to that trills and cadenzas and grace notes, which repeat themselves at every turn, I should like to know what analogy there can be between speech and this pretended recitative, the invention of which made Lully's name.

" It is quite evident that the recitative best suited to the French tongue ought to be the exact opposite, in nearly every way, to the one which

is in use; it should wander between little intervals, and neither raise nor lower the voice very much; it should have little sustained sound, no noise, and no cries of any description—nothing indeed that resembles singing, and little inequality in the duration or value of the notes, or in their intervals. In short, true French recitative, if such a thing could be, would find itself walking in exactly the opposite direction to the recitative of Lully and his predecessors. . . ."

Is there any truth in this premature Debussyist criticism? Is Lully's declamation not a good natural declamation, or even a good dramatic declamation? And has it no resemblance to life?

It seems to me we must, in nearly all Lully's recitative, or recitative airs, pick out certain phrases which are, in a way, the kernel of the whole. These phrases have a special value, and generally occur at the beginning of a recitative. As a rule they follow fairly closely the natural intonations of a character and its emotions, and they are put together with care. The phrases that follow are much weaker and more carelessly composed. It often happens that the first phrase is repeated word for word in the course of the opera, and at the end of it as well, to make a conclusion. It is thus a sort of skeleton which holds up a rather loose construction.[1]

[1] Thus in *Atys*:
Act I: "Atys est trop heureux."
Act III: "Que servent les faveurs."
Act IV: "Espoir si cher et si doux."
And in *Alceste*, in the nymph's air, the sentence "Le héros que j'attends ne reviendra-t-il pas?" is repeated five times, and expresses the insistence of its languorous sentiment.

This word for word repetition is one of the elements of Lully's art, and was characteristic of the art of his time, which loved symmetry, and the balance of alternate phrases, and ornamental effects. Even when Lully had not recourse to this method, and when his first phrase did not become a decorative motive or the key to the whole structure of his piece, yet he always paid special attention to it. The number of these first phrases which are natural, well proportioned, sincere in feeling, and even lovely, is quite considerable. The phrase accompanying Theone's words in *Phaéton :* " La mer est quelquefois dans une paix profonde . . ." is of quite classic beauty ; and so is the first phrase in Lybie's air : " Heureuse une âme indifférente . . ." in the same opera.

The sins of the recitative lie in what follows. One can picture Lully at work, as depicted by La Viéville —reading and rereading, singing and resinging the words that he has to deal with, until he has soaked himself in the feeling and rhythm of the first lines of the text. After that he trusts to his own long-winded readiness, and falls into formulas ;[1] that is until he comes across a highly interesting passage of declamation which induces him to make a new effort. But even then he does not let himself follow out any new idea in melody or rhythm ; he remains

[1] One feels here the difference between the scholar musician, who borrows his inspiration from the literary text, and sometimes sees in it fine melodic motifs which he does not turn to account ; and the born musician, who sets out with a commonplace subject, and by degrees draws from it some wonderful ideas.

faithful to his first phrase and even keeps to the same key; allowing the careful and intelligent consideration of a few inflections of voice to be sufficient for him. There is a great deal of intelligent observation in Lully's declamation, and it is the thing that strikes us most—far more indeed than his musical inspiration or intensity of feeling. It was this intelligence which pleased the people of his time so much.

Lully's contemporaries admired his intellect, which he certainly showed in every way: "His music alone," says La Viéville, "would be proof of his capability; and his mind shines out in his songs, as it does in other directions. However," he continues—and with more discernment than he guesses—"it is not in his important airs and pieces that his intellect most strikes us; it is rather in little things—in the answers he would give his singers, which were made in the same tone and with the same cunning air that he would have used in a world of wits."

The limits of Lully's talents could not have been more nicely observed or better put. He is not at his best in passages of feeling, but in those that express some subtlety of mind. Dramatic airs, such as the two great scenes in *Armide*, or Io's air in *Isis*, "*Terminez mes tourments*," or Roland's song of anger, "*Je suis trahi!*" are not common in Lully's operas, nor are they perfect; and Rousseau speaks of "the little tavern air at the end of Armida's monologue in Act II." Despite the vigour of certain phrases, one feels that strong stirrings of

passion were not natural to Lully. He was not emotional like Gluck; he was intelligent, and had an appreciation of passion and its grandeur. He saw it from without, and painted it by an effort of will. There are times when he knows how to be grand; but he is never profound. He has rarely dramatic force; though he has always a feeling for rhythm, and skill in right emphasis. That is to say, he had all the means for the expression of emotion; but emotion itself was, unhappily, not within him.

On the other hand, he found it easy to depict temperate feelings; and this was just what suited his aristocratic audience. He had plenty of models about him, and had also an observant eye. He excelled in gallant speech; for this had been taught him by Lambert and Boësset in the recitative dialogues of noble lovers, with their sighs and voluptuous airs. And he knew exactly how to paint a court atmosphere of vanity and pride. La Viéville says:

> "Observe the whole part of Phaëthon, the singular character of this ambitious young man who is always witty, when other operatic heroes would have been tender. How Lully knows and makes us know the rascal! . . ."

In spite of Lully's undoubted subtlety and the ingenuity of his critics, we cannot deceive ourselves that his music, even at its best, has the depth that La Viéville and the abbé Duclos would have us believe. The artful Italian deceives them. The intellect and distinction of this upstart foreigner

are often nothing but a coating of varnish. In places even the varnish is scratched; and then one sees that Lully did not always understand the text of his poem; that is, he may have read the words, but did not digest them. Rousseau showed us some of his errors; and here is one—a passage in one of Armida's monologues:

"Le charme du sommeil le livre à ma vengeance. . . ."[1]

The words "charme" and "sommeil," says Rousseau, led him into a trap: he forgot Armida's anger, had forty winks, and woke up again at the words: "Je vais *percer* son invincible cœur."[2]

One might almost say that Lully's subtlety played him tricks, by preventing him from feeling the heart's true impulses; and leading him to follow the letter of the text, so that his work is all on the surface, clear enough in design, but without depth. Also one grows rather mistrustful of him as one reads the seventeenth-century commentaries on his work, and finds his followers fancying great psychological cunning in the least of his touches. La Viéville's criticism of *Armide* makes one think of the extravagant Wagnerian reviews of twenty years ago. A small example will serve to show the part autosuggestion played in this enthusiasm. La Viéville was in an ecstasy of admiration over every bar of *Armide:*

"'*Le perfide Renaud me fuit . . .*'[3] Do you

[1] The charm of sleep delivers him into my hands.
[2] I will pierce his unconquerable heart.
[3] Perfidious Reynold flies from me. . . .

see the grace-note and trill on the minim of the words '*me fuit*'? This long note means '*me fuit pour jamais.*'"[1]

How much meaning may a *gruppetto* enclose!

The recitative in the first act again rouses his transports:

"Armida begins, after a mournful and sullen silence: '*Je ne triomphe pas du plus vaillant de tous. . . .*' What a fragment! Each note is suited to each word, so that altogether they make an unforgettable impression on the heart of the listener. '*La conquête d'un cœur si superbe et si grand. . . .*'"

Here La Viéville is enraptured over the shout on the word "*superbe.*" "A man is indeed stupid," he says farther on, "if he is not moved by the raising of Armida's voice, which comes both fitly and appropriately in this last verse:

"Dans ce fatal moment qu'il me perçoit le cœur."

"On the word 'perçoit' I can see Reynold stabbing Armida to the heart, despite her supplications. . . ."

All this makes good reading in La Viéville's *Commentaire*, and perhaps it was fine to see Armida played by Le Rochois. But when one opens the score, one is very astonished that the cause of all this outburst is simply one of the perfect cadences which Lully uses—a commonplace and redundant

[1] Flies from me *for ever*.

finish to a phrase. And worse still, this particular conclusion is exactly the same as one he uses a few pages previously for another line: "*La conquête d'un cœur si superbe et si grand,*" which La Viéville also admires for its fitness and appropriateness, without observing that the same formula serves for both cases!

One must have a great deal of good-nature to become ecstatic over such methods of expression. If they were really effective, one must give homage, as Rousseau says, to the actress's arms and gestures. The most that one can say is that the music does not greatly hinder dramatic expression; but that is a long way from claiming that it is expressive.

On the whole, the passages of poetic discourse that have a psychological, picturesque, or dramatic interest, are rarely characterized with any precision. They are just accentuated enough, and show a certain delicacy of perception; but they are very little differentiated from the rest of the recitative's unvaried movement and monotonous progress.

The most sincere part of these recitatives is, I repeat, their beginnings. It is but rarely that Lully does not begin his scenes in a really tempting

way; but he scarcely ever develops them with comfort and freedom. He nearly always follows the same road—a very clean, smooth road that lies straight before us and offers us nothing in the way of surprises. He generally finishes in the key in which he began, and scarcely ever leaves the most nearly related keys; going regularly from the dominant to the tonic, and emphasizing the cadences by expanding the phrases towards the end and decorating them with a final *gruppetto* on the last word. To know the dignified development of one of these recitatives is to know them nearly all.

. . . . . .

You must not suppose that this monotony did not strike Lully's contemporaries; many of them judged it as we should now. La Viéville tells us that some people complained of the tedium of the "dull recitatives, which were nearly all alike." The Italian actors scoffed at them, and Scaramouche sang in Act II of the *Promenades de Paris:*

"Chantez, chantez, petits oiseaux,
Près de vous l'Opéra, l'Opéra doit se taire.
Vous faites tous les jours des chants, des airs nouveaux,
Et l'Opéra n'en saurait faire."[1]

To which the Lullyists, who were much bothered to know how to defend Lully, might have retorted that the little birds did not sing new songs every day. Lully's followers had a great deal to say about

[1] Sing, sing, little birds,
For then the Opera beside you will be silent.
Every day you sing new songs and new airs,
Which is more than the Opera can do.

the fertility of his imagination and the diversity of his accents—in particular those of the exclamation "Alas!"[1]—but they were obliged to admit that their hero often repeated himself, not only in his recitatives, but in his airs as well, and in every piece he had written since his first work, *Cadmus et Hermione*.

To this troublesome criticism his followers made the most ingenious reply. They took the text of some remarks by the chevalier de Méré:

> "People who explain themselves best generally use more repetitions than others. . . . This is because those who write well usually first seek the best words and the best phrases in which to clothe their thoughts. But when they return to these thoughts, as often happens, although they know variety is pleasing, yet they find difficulty in quitting the best expression of their thought for something less good; while other people, who are not so fastidious, use the first words that occur to them."

And these ideas were developed thus:

> "Quinault has given Lully the same sentiments and the same words to translate into song a hundred times over. It was not possible for him to find a hundred different ways of expressing them and making them all equally good. . . . He tried from the very first to find the best expression

[1] "There are from two to three hundred 'alases' in each of his pieces," says La Viéville, "and in what great variety and of what prodigious singing force! . . ."

for them ; and if he did not find it the first time he found it later, and after that made use of expressions which most nearly approached the best one, reintroducing it as was necessary, with all the art of a skilled musician and man of understanding. And when he felt that he could not alter these expressions without making them seem forced or inappropriate, he could not bring himself to abandon what was fit and natural for the sake of novelty ; and he preferred to have less variety about his tones than to employ bad ones. That does not mean that he was never lazy or lacking in inspiration. People have found fault with Homer and Virgil for the same weaknesses—and with justice—and we must remember these writers were not dissolute like Lully. But I am sure Lully often did not try to find new tones, on account of the worth of his first tones ; and so he contented himself with disguising the latter, and with changing them a little by differences of harmony. Even *Cadmus* is a proof of this. . . . It was his first grand opera. If he repeated himself in several places, it was not through idleness or negligence ; for he was too interested in his success to spare any pains. . . . It is on account of his recitatives that he has been taxed with poverty of ideas and negligence. He put all the variety he could into them . . . and he knew quite well how to make them individual when the poet gave him a chance. . . . But, after all, by what efforts or what secret could Lully help copying and repeating himself, unless

he resorted to artificialities? which remedy is worse than the disease, and may be left to Italians. The aim of music is to *reproduce* poetry; and if a musician applies unsuitable expression to verses or ideas, it is of no consequence whether the tones are new or clever; for to reproduce poetry differently is to reproduce it badly. If a thought pleases in itself, and strikes or moves people, there is no need to seek for elegant words; for it is sufficient that the words reproduce the sense correctly. . . . To explain well, to set out well—that is the best work. And in this way, even though a musician attain his best work through apparent sterility and incapacity, he will always be the gainer."[1]

I was anxious to give this quotation in its entirety; for whether one agrees with its ideas or not, it is an admirable manifesto of strong reasoning and faith in itself, and a foreshadowing of Gluck's own famous manifestos. People have sought Italian forerunners of Gluck in men like Algarotti and Calsabigi. But we have a French forerunner worth ten of them; and as he is the theorist of Lullyism, one may see that Gluck, in reducing music to the careful *reproduction* of poetry, has only followed Lully's traditions.

We are at the moment, however, searching for certain characteristics of Lully's music—his poverty of invention, and his repetitions—in these lines of apology. What are we to think of these traits?

[1] Lecerf de la Viéville de la Fresneuse, *Comparaison de la musique italienne et de la musique française*, 1705, Brussels.

I shall not discuss the question as to whether real genius has not more than one way of expressing the same thing, or if nature can present a situation twice alike. Let us, however, admit de Méré's theory for once; for at least it conforms to the healthy moderation of the classical spirit, which approves of these little varied expressions, apt for their purpose, and not fearing to repeat themselves when the sentiment is repeated, lest exaggeration and affected elegance should bring weakness and insincerity of thought.

But is it true that Lully's repetitions come from this honesty of thought and the fear of false sentiment?

He has a certain number of repetitions which have been really thought out, and proceed from a feeling like that explained by La Viéville; and it seems certain that with Lully the same words and the same sentiments evoke the same melodic phrases. One may find dozens of examples of this. Among others take "Revenez, revenez," from *Thesée*, *Atys*, and *Isis*:

Atys (IV. 2):

Thesée (Prologue):

Isis (I, 1):

The same thing happens when he has to depict a river, or the rustling of the wind. His design for such things is always picturesque, yet it is nearly always the same design, and one knows that he is representing *the* stream and *the* wind. It was part of the abstract and generalizing spirit of the time, the spirit which in literature studied man in general, and which in painting—even in landscape painting like Claude Lorraine's—depicted trees of no particular kind, but rather trees in general. And so it was not wonderful that Lully delighted in melodic types and general formulas, which reappeared whenever he had to reproduce like sentiments or things.

But he wrote also many other repetitions which do not enter into the above category—repetitions of form which do not correspond to repetitions of sentiment. I have already quoted an example from *Armide*. They are *clichés* and formulas cast in the same mould; and although Lully's idleness may possibly explain this poverty of imagination, that is really only half an explanation. One meets these repetitions in pages of his work which are quite important and carefully composed; and so it seems it was some system of the composer's rather than a passing weakness. It is not a case of identity of the type of sentiment—such as Love and Hate—

leading to identity of melodic phrasing; it is a graver fault than that—identity of oratorical phrasing. Here the construction of the literary discourse, with its monotonous and accentual song, is translated into musical discourse of the same kind, whatever sentiment is being expressed, In short, it is the rhetorical despotism of that time, with its diffuse development, its symmetrical phrasing, and pompous cadences. The ideal aimed at in this particular musical declamation is oratorical rather than dramatic. Are we then to suppose that the model Lully followed (that is, Racine's tragedy as declaimed by Champmeslé) showed the same characteristics? Well, I am inclined to think so. Nothing can give us a more intimate acquaintance with the spirit of that tragic art and its original interpretation than such of these great recitatives as were translated into music by Lully after the model of the declamation and acting of his time—a model he somewhat enlarged, though without altering its proportions. An example of this may be found in the famous scene where Armida finds Reynold asleep; which scene remained, until the middle of the eighteenth century, the most perfect model, not only of French recitative, but of French tragic declamation.[1]

In spite of Rousseau's acid criticisms, where he finds "neither rhythm, nor character, nor melody, nor life, nor expression" in this scene, it has

[1] The prévost d'Exmes reports, in 1779, that Mlle Lecouvreur was asked to declaim Armida's monologue, "*Enfin! il est en ma puissance*"; and that surprise was felt when it was found that her declamation conformed exactly to Lully's.

throughout great vigour and majesty; though the stirrings of emotion and the inflections of the voice obey laws of oratorical and intellectual balance, of reasoned symmetry, of convention, of dignity and decorum—all of which direct and restrain life and passion. We have to-day another ideal, and the old one seems to us dignified but cold. It did not appear to be so to people in the seventeenth century;[1] for the general public, as well as people of taste and learned dilettanti, saw a faithful and impassioned reproduction of life in these recitatives. La Viéville says:

> "When Armida rouses herself to stab Reynold in the last scene in Act II, I have scores of times seen people breathless and rigid with fear, with their whole heart in their ears and eyes, until the violin air that finishes the scene set them breathing again with sighs of pleasure and admiration."

In truth, Lully's declamation exactly corresponded to the theatrical truths of that time; that is to say, to the idea people had of truth in a theatre; for though truth itself is immutable, our conception of truth is always changing. And so Lully's recitative, taking both his faults and his virtues into consideration, was most likely a faithful representation of the tragic ideals of his time; and, as I said at the beginning, it is of no small interest to us to

[1] It should be noted that Lully's recitative—like the rest of his music—was taken, under his direction, in a much more lively and less tiresome fashion than it was in later times. "It was less sung and more declaimed." I will return later to this point.

find a reflection of the declamation and acting of Racine's tragedies preserved for us in Lully's music.

. . . . .

IV

HETEROGENEOUS ELEMENTS IN LULLY'S OPERAS

We know that the recitative—the poetic declamation of the theatre or *salon*, transposed into music—was the skeleton of Lully's operas; but it must not be thought that the rest of the structure matched the framework that supported it. It does not; it is not always of the same style, it is not homogeneous; it is a sort of masonry of different materials, which are, so to speak, piled about the supports.

In all great artist reformers there are two elements: a reforming spirit, which is generally of a deliberate and rational character, and an instinct, which is often of a very opposite nature. People who have no great capacity for life in all its contradictions and complexities are sometimes severely critical of artists who are at variance with their own principles. These people take a wicked joy in noting that Gluck, in spite of all his fine theories about the function of operatic music being exactly to imitate its poetic text, did not hesitate to transplant airs from his old operas into *Iphigénie en Tauride*, simply because he found them good and pleasing. And they are no less happy to find Wagner writing a quintet in the *Meistersinger*, and committing this or that

violation of his sacred doctrines. They indignantly denounce such people as renegades, or even as humbugs who make rules and are careful not to follow them. Theirs is a very abstract and very poor idea of the nature of a true artist. A true artist is too animate to be able to reduce himself to terms of reason and will. And even when such qualities show him he is on the right road, that does not prevent his creative spirit from adventuring upon other roads; and the more life he has in him, the oftener that will happen.

Further, no revolution in art—or in anything else—is achieved suddenly and by the annihilation of all that went before. The chief revolutionaries in art—and other things—were, to a great extent, conservatives. The past and the future were mixed in them in varying degrees. Lully was in many ways an innovator in art; in other ways he only revived and followed past traditions. He had not been the recognized musician of the King's Ballets and Molière's collaborator in his comedy-ballets for nothing. He never quite threw off the old Adam, the clown, and the fooling that had had the honour of exciting the king's laughter. He never quite cast aside his part as organizer of the court fêtes, nor his Italian skin. In his French operas one may often find a comic vein like that in the *Bourgeois gentilhomme*, as well as the spirit and form of the court *Dialogues* and old French ballets; and at long intervals the Italian in him shows the tip of an ear.

This diversity of musical elements may be more

easily seen in his early works, as is only natural. His first real opera, *Cadmus et Hermione*, is therefore particularly interesting; for the opera that preceded it, *Les Festes de l'Amour et de Bacchus*, was nothing but a medley of old dance tunes. In *Cadmus et Hermione* one sees a younger Lully, a musician less absorbed in his theories, who risks for the first time a great stake, and who is set on winning it; a man who is not stingy about his music, but gives all that he has to give. Lully never wrote a more generous, more courageous, or more exuberant opera than that. There one finds him at his dramatic best in admirable examples of tragic declamation. One may say that in the whole of his works there are few passages comparable for truth of declamation with Cadmus's farewell to Hermione. There one may also find a famous type of operatic scene, which was to have an astonishing success in France, and a lasting one, too, since it is still in vogue—that is the temple scene with high priests and sacrifices.[1] Lully's scenes are, moreover, superior to nearly all those that followed; for they have no solemn and tiresome mummery, the caricatures of

[1] One imagines that this kind of spectacle was in our blood, for even in Cambert's *Les Peines et les Plaisirs de l'Amour* in 1672, there was a famous act—the second—depicting Climène's tomb, where in an avenue of cypress trees, around a white sepulchre, a splendid funeral ceremony was held. The French at the end of the seventeenth century were very proud of their operatic scenes, which they considered kind of national specialities. "Sacrifices, invocations, and solemn oaths," says Lecerf de la Viéville, "are agreeablenesses unknown to the Italians." One sees by this that the French people of that time had a taste for stately things; their neo-classic spirit is here combined with their predilections as Roman Catholics for the pomp of great religious ceremonies.

things religious, but breathe instead an air of heroic jubilation.

Alongside these great scenes (preludes to Gluck's and Rameau's operatic tragedies) is an important comic element, which sometimes verges on the burlesque. At first we have parts for Italian buffoons, like the bullying and cowardly valet and the amorous nurse—two characters which run through all Venetian and Neapolitan opera. Then there are giants, as in *Rheingold;* but with the difference that the giants in *Cadmus* are not to be taken seriously. Hermione, the captive princess, is to be married to one of them; and this giant has companions of his own size, who come to dance a ballet in honour of the princess. Of course this takes us a long way from lyric tragedy, and leads us back to the Italian and French ballets of the first half of the century. The music corresponds with these characters. In comic airs and dances we get the style of Italian *buffa* after the manner of Cavalli or Cesti,[1] and not unlike the style of Cambert's pastorals or Molière's ballet-comedies,[2] for which Lully wrote music. They are concert-room airs introduced into the opera. On the whole, one may say

[1] Airs of the valet Arbas.

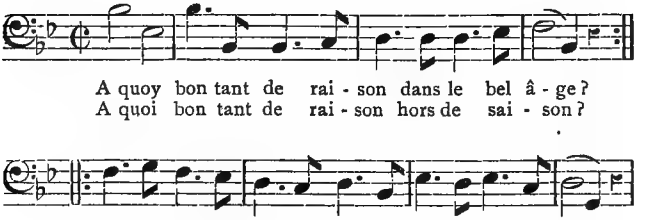
[2] Archas's air, *Quelque embarras que l'amour fasse*, recalls the air of the Poitou men in the *Bourgeois gentilhomme*. The rondo-air of the Fauns and Pan's air, *Que chacun se ressente*, certainly took their model from Cambert's pastorals. The delightful chaconne, *Suivons l'amour*, sung in Act I, is quite in the manner of a ballet-comedy. Some of the airs are of a vaudeville nature, like the Nurse's air, *Ah! vraiment, je vous trouve bonne*. Besides dance tunes, there are delicately humorous airs, like Aglante's pretty song, *On a beau fuir l'amour*, which shows that Lully could have been, if he had liked, one of the most charming of

that opera itself had but a poor place in this first opera. Three-quarters of the piece is concert music, pastoral music, court airs, *opéra-bouffe*, and ballet-comedy. All this side of Lully's work is, however, very interesting, and often excellent. Lully was there at his ease; the music was expressive of his true nature, and he must have renounced it with difficulty. If he had not been constrained, he would never have quitted that kind of work, and, who knows? he might perhaps have kept quite as much glory.

As *Cadmus* had a triumphant success,[1] Lully did not think of changing his manner all at once; and *Alceste*, the opera that followed in 1674, shows the same kind of heterogeneous character, though it may be rather less marked. Comedy still held a considerable place in *Alceste;* and not only were there great comic scenes on a large and almost majestic scale (such as Charon's scene which opens Act IV), but, as in *Cadmus*, there were comic airs in the Venetian manner (such as Licomède's and Céphise's), and very characteristic vaudeville airs (such as Straton's), which have the flavour of popular songs.

our minor composers and a founder of *opéra-comique*. But most abundant of all in *Cadmus* are the court airs—the gallant songs in Lambert's style, like the *Air du Soleil*, more suited to the concert-room than the theatre.

[1] The king was enraptured with *Cadmus*, and never tired of it, even to his last days. Lecerf de la Viéville tells us that in his old age, after hearing some of Corelli's airs, which were then the fashion, Louis XIV made one of his violinists play an air from *Cadmus*, and said, "I can only tell you that that is my own taste." Naturally the court shared this taste, and *Cadmus* definitely secured the success of French opera, which at the time was uncertain.



One is struck by the great number of vocalizations and trills which Lully still introduced. His style was not yet fixed, and he was endeavouring to compromise between the old and the new elements, between the foreign and the French.

Alceste was not altogether a success. People were shocked by the mixture of tragedy and buffoonery, the latter being out of place in this fine classical subject.[1] It was a good sign for Lully. Already, in 1675, *Thesée*, without having altogether abandoned the comic, contained only a softened element of it, which went fairly well with the rest of the tragic action; and we get a duet between the two old Athenians, which is a little caricature in quite good taste, with an Attic smack about it.

In 1676, a decided change was shown in *Atys* of the direction opera was taking. Thenceforward Lully followed the taste of the young court in its gallantry and refinement, and became an ideal

[1] Boscheron says that Quinault was taken to task for having spoilt Euripides' subject with pointless episodes. One finds an echo of the polemics raised by *Alceste* in the apologetic writings of Charles Perrault's *Critique de l'Opéra, ou examen de la tragédie intitulée Alceste.*

Racinist. His opera was now a sort of amorous elegy, from which all comic and vulgar elements and, especially, all buffoonery, were banished. The first act of *Atys* seemed to his contemporaries a masterpiece of lyric tragedy; and Lecerf de la Viéville declares it is almost too beautiful, because it kills all that follows it. It is a romantic elegy, the greater part of which consists of pastoral airs, in the midst of which a love scene of a delicate and touching nature is introduced, recalling certain scenes in *Bérénice*, though there is nothing really tragic about it. The only truly dramatic scene in the opera is that which enacts the murder of Sangaride by Atys (who has been driven to madness by Cybela), then Atys's return to reason, the discovery of her crime, her terror, and finally her suicide—a scene which needed Gluck's savage power. The rest quickly closes with a pastoral fête and an apotheosis. One feels here that Lully deliberately set out to eliminate anything excessive from his opera, whether of a tragic or comic nature.

The success of *Atys* was great, and the work was named "The King's Opera," because the king preferred it to any other. Perhaps, however, in his wish to purify and elevate opera, to leave in it nothing but noble and refined elements, Lully overshot the mark; for Saint-Évremond, after acknowledging the beauty of the work, says: "It was here that we began to feel the tediousness of song when it is too long continued." There was, indeed, in this new system a danger of monotony, which Lully must have felt himself and endeavoured afterwards

to correct.[1] At the same time, one may say that after *Atys* his operatic ideal had almost solidified; and under the influence of the prevailing French taste he sacrificed comedy and powerful drama to the painting of shades of emotion, to *salon* tragedies, to psychological, oratorical, or courtly effects. In place of the ballet-comedy he put the ballet-tragedy.

He fashioned this art to his own liking; but he had some trouble to do it. It remained always an effort for him, and he never succeeded in stifling his original spirit. He was by nature a composer of royal ballets, and such he always remained. On the rare occasions when he returned to this kind of composition, or if his operas in any way approached it, he brought to it a delicacy of touch and a peculiar warmth of imagination, which was rarely evoked elsewhere.

His gift of humour was unfortunately kept under after the production of *Alceste*[2]; although here and there it breaks out, as in the duet between the two old men in *Thesée*, or in the trio of cowards in *Isis*.

[1] In the next piece, his admirable *Isis* (1677), he introduced new elements. Without disturbing the balance of the tragedy as rudely as he had done in *Alceste*, he introduced, but with discretion, a comic element, taking care to preserve the dignified outline of the whole opera. "He took infinite pains with this opera," says La Viéville; and he varied the scenes, the dances, and the delicate symphonies, as much as possible, and at the same time tried to stir up the action.

[2] Perrault, in his defence of *Alceste*, has good reason to deplore the fact that "connoisseurs" are able to impose any taste they like upon the general public. The general public found enjoyment in the mixture of comedy and tragedy and "little songs"; but they were frightened by the opinions of the *élite*, and dared not uphold their choice. "Was it because there was nothing in them," asks Perrault, "that people knew them by heart and were singing them on every side?"

In his last work, *Acis et Galatée*, he created, however, the comic character of Polyphemus, which is admirable in its whole-hearted joviality. Lully's sense of humour seems particularly to expend itself on physical defects, and in an amusing fashion he depicted the quavering voices of the old Athenians, or the frozen hyperboreans with their teeth chattering amid ice and snow. This slyness of musical observation is an Italian trait, which had already been remarked in Cavalli. The Polyphemus of *Acis* has a certain vocal characteristic, a sort of *leit-motif* of song, which recurs several times, and which seems to represent the grotesque and halting gait of the amorous monster. The orchestra has some delightful bits of burlesque in the accompaniment. At the entrance of Polyphemus and his suite in Act II, "the whistling of a coppersmith," says Lecerf de la Viéville, "pleasantly interrupts the heavy foolery of the march." Humour was so natural to Lully, that sometimes he tumbled into it in spite of himself. His followers reproach him with allowing himself at times to be carried away by some "misplaced gaiety," or "vicious jest," as La Viéville puts it when referring to an air in *Phaéton* and a duet in *Persée*. There is a chorus in *Armide* which is very like an Offenbach burlesque. So it would seem that the exuberant Italian temperament broke loose at times from the heavy restraints put upon it.[1]

If Lully was not able—and the fact is regrettable

[1] Lully sought relaxation from his operas by writing topical songs and Bacchic airs. "He sang the bass and accompanied

—freely to develop his comic genius, he had, on the other hand, every opportunity for transferring the true Pastoral from the ballet into the opera; and it is perhaps into that side of his work that he has put most sincerity, emotion, and poetic feeling.

Pastoral feeling was very strong in the seventeenth century. It seems amusing to pretend, as critics did formerly, that in the time of Louis XIV no one cared about nature. As a matter of fact, people were very fond of it, although in a different way from ourselves. It was the age of gardens, woods, fountains, and still waters. It was not wild and uncultivated nature that pleased people; nor were they attracted by untamed forces as we are (as if we had not already enough of such things within us). What they asked for was the pleasure of unruffled tranquillity, of that splendid and rather meditative joy, which is both material and spiritual, and which a vigorous and wholesome temperament in an active body possibly knows best—or at any rate is readier to taste. It is remarkable that Händel, Gluck, and Beethoven, the three classic musicians who have best expressed this voluptuous repose in nature, have been also the most active forces in music. The seventeenth century—in Italy, Germany, England, and France—was filled with pastoral sentiment; and we see it flourishing in the greatest masters of opera—in Cavalli, Cesti, Purcell, and Keiser, and, to a certain extent, in

himself on the harpsichord." In truth, one remarks a good many songs in his operas that are of this type!

Cambert.[1] But no one of them was comparable in this direction to Lully. In this particular form, Lully's dry and superficial soul, and his intelligent rather than sincere nature, attained a truthfulness and purity of feeling which equalled that of the greatest poets in music. He has hardly written an opera that does not breathe this poetry of nature, of night, and of silence.[2] We find it in the prologue of *Cadmus*, in the rural scene in *Thesée*, in the sleep of *Atys*, in Pan's elegy in *Isis*, in the nymphs' choruses and dances in *Proserpine*, in the symphony and song of Night in the *Triomphe de l'Amour*, in the village wedding in *Roland*, in Reynold's sleep in *Armide*, and in his last work, *Acis*, which is a pastoral in itself.

"Reynold's sleep" has been set to music by Gluck, as you know, with great seductive power. Gluck apparently wished his predecessor's famous air to be forgotten; and he succeeded in his purpose. But the beauty of Lully's music remains, nevertheless, and in certain aspects it is on a higher level than Gluck's. Nothing is more interesting than a comparison of the two works. Naturally Lully's instrumental resources were more restricted, and his contours are simpler; but for that very reason how much finer the result! Gluck's delightful

[1] Without mentioning the masters of "court airs," such as the delightful Guesdron and Boësset, and especially Lambert, who was in that, as well as other things, one of Lully's models. "In sylvan airs," says Lecerf de la Viéville, Lully is our hero, or at least Lambert's equal.

[2] See the *Triomphe de l'Amour* and "the sweet harmony which mingles and blends with the voice of Night. Night, the hidden Diana, Mystery, Silence, Dreams. . . ."

orchestration depicts a true pastoral symphony, filled with the murmuring of violins—the murmuring sound of a green wood. His outlines are like interlacing foliage, and full of little trills like the songs of birds; his nature is rich and fruitful, abounding in life—a rather Flemish nature. Then think of the simple unfolding of Lully's symphony, with its smooth flow of sound from muted violins and its calm melancholy. Beside Gluck's bushy landscapes it has a clear, pure look, like a delicate silhouette against the light, or the design on a Greek vase. After a page of symphony, where both musicians create their atmosphere—the luminous essence of their picture—song is introduced. Here Lully's superiority seems to me very striking, except in his final bars, where, following the passion of the day for polished work, he makes too elaborate a finish. Gluck, on the other hand, is more of a realist, and so lets his airs languish a little; leaves them hanging, as it were, in the drowsiness of sleep. But in Lully's airs the natural beauty of the voice floats confidently on the quiet stream of the accompaniment. The declamation follows in the current of its own proper rhythm. The beauty of Gluck's declamation is less certain; it depends on the orchestra, and does not soar above it; man's being is here absorbed in nature. With Lully the voice keeps its personality; and this was in accordance with the æsthetic principles of the time, which demanded that the voice should always be the chief instrument in the expression of feeling. La Viéville writes:

"Your hero is about to die of love and sorrow; he says so, but what he sings does not say so and is not affecting; I feel no sympathy for his trouble. . . . Yet the accompaniment would rend rocks asunder. A curious compensation! Is the orchestra the hero? No, it is the singer. Well, then, why does not the singer move me by depicting what he suffers in an expressive song? why does he leave the orchestra to do it for him? since the orchestra is only there by grace and accident. *Si vis me flere.* . . . If the orchestra joins with the singer in stirring my emotions, so much the better; for that is explaining things in a double way. But the singer's part comes first and is the most necessary."

I shall not carry the comparison between Lully and Gluck any farther; for it is not a case of the superiority of one artist over the other, but of a double ideal, where different arts are equally excellent. Gluck's melodies are often commonplace, and the beauty of his art is chiefly a moral beauty, and bears the impression of a great soul. Lully's beauty is chiefly plastic, and is mostly due to the softness of his outlines, little varied though they are; and to features here and there, or just a profile of exquisite loveliness and an atmosphere of delicate transparency. The pastoral scene in *Atys*, and still more that in *Isis*, where the plaintive nymph is changed into a reed, show very clearly their Greek ideal.

There is in each of Lully's operas a part which

forms a true court ballet, and that is the Prologue. It is far from being the least interesting part of his operas, and Lully took great pains with it. The prologue is a small piece that stands by itself. In *Proserpine*, for example, we have Peace a prisoner, oppressed by Discord and finally delivered by Victory. Sometimes it is in the form of a little intrigue, a rather bloodless one perhaps, since it is always allegorical and adulatory; but it lends itself to a delightful union of court airs and dancing. The charm of the prologue to *Thesée*, which takes place in the gardens before the palace at Versailles, is well known; and there is the prologue to *Amadis*, which is a sort of awakening of a sleeping Beauty in a wood, in the presence of her court. With their patriotic gaiety and their allusions to recent events in the military or court world of the great king,[1] Lully's prologues have rather the atmosphere of the national fêtes of old France; and they are the last sanctuary of the court ballets. In them one recognizes the Lully of the ballet-comedies. They are

[1] Perhaps the historical interest of Quinault's libretti has not been sufficiently pointed out. They often reflect events at court in a quite thinly veiled manner; and as none of the poems was written without being shown to the king and discussed by him, it is permissible to seek his direct influence or inspiration in some of the scenes. Such a scene may be found in *Proserpine*—a famous scene between Ceres and Mercury, full of allusions to the amorous infidelities of the king, who was then in love with Mlle de Fontanges, and who wished to set up the example of the abandoned Ceres and her seemly grief as a contrast to Mme de Montespan and her jealous reproaches. The audience were in no doubt about the matter, and Mme de Sevigné writes on February 9, 1680: "There is a scene between Ceres and Mercury which is not difficult to interpret: *it must have been approved*, since it is being performed."

The Prologues, where the hero always represents the king,

small collections of gallant airs, of duets, trios, and concert-room choruses, mingled with dances, which are sometimes sung, or sung and danced alternately. Besides that, they also include little symphonies, marches, and processions.

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V

LULLY'S SYMPHONIES

Lully's symphonies seem to us to-day the least interesting part of his work. His overtures are stiff and heavy. M. Lionel de la Laurencie notes that their themes, which are all of very similar construction, "constitute in music the equivalent of general expressions in a language." The dances also do not show much variety; and with few exceptions have neither the feeling for rhythm shown in the preceding epoch, nor the graceful harmonic and melodic inventiveness of the period that followed.

And yet various symphonies greatly contributed

closely follow the history of the wars and treaties of that time. *Isis* celebrates the naval victories obtained by Jean Bart, Duquesne, and Vivonne. *Bellérophon* and *Proserpine* sing of a triumphant peace—which was already menacing the security of the rest of the world.

"He will bring the universe into subjection," says Quinault, criticizing a letter from Mme de Sevigné to Bussy: "Peace is made. The king found it better to give it this year to Spain and Holland, than to take the rest of Flanders. He is keeping that for another time."

The history of the reign is unfolded in these prologues; even to the reception-rooms, to which allusion is made in the prologue of *Persée!*

to the success of Lully's operas; one may even say that in his whole work nothing was more highly appreciated in Europe, or had more influence on musical evolution. Their only detractors during Lully's life were among the Italians, who only knew them, as we do, by reading them; and found them, as we do, insipid and monotonous. Can it be that we have lost the secret of that music with the loss of its execution? That is what I want to discuss.

So far as the overtures go, we must first of all remember that they were composed expressly for performance in large theatres. Marpurg finds that at the Opera in Dresden "Lully's rather dry overtures make a better effect when played by the whole orchestra, than more pleasing and taking overtures by other celebrated composers; though the works of the latter seem much finer when they are played in a concert-room."[1]

These overtures were the foundation of the overture in France. Their form was quite as much Lully's own invention as the form of Italian overtures was the invention of Alessandro Scarlatti.[2] As Scarlatti had taken his models from Stefano Landi, from 1632 onwards, so Lully had followed the examples of Cavalli, Cambert, and Cesti.[3]

[1] Marpurg, *Historisch-kritische Beyträge zur Aufnahme der Musik*, Berlin, 1754.

[2] The type of Italian overture sketched out by Landi in the second act of his *S. Alessio* includes a quick movement, a slow movement, and another quick movement.

[3] M. Henry Prunières claims that Lully created the French overture. He shows the first example of it very clearly in the ballet *Alcidiane* (1658), though he thinks that Cesti may have inspired it. (*Notes sur les origines de l'ouverture française*, 1911.)

But, like Scarlatti, Lully shaped a definite type of overture, and made it classic. This form of overture consists first of all of a slow movement, in an abrupt and heavy style, in two time; then a lively skipping movement in fugue form, generally in three time; and lastly a solemn peroration in two time, which sometimes takes up the first phrases, and develops them, so as to make a well-rounded finish. That was Händel's model. Sir Hubert Parry has shown how the author of the *Messiah* closely followed Lully's overtures, and in particular that of *Thesée*; for he uses the same construction, the same majestic manner, and sometimes even the same broad and massive harmonic progressions.

These overtures had little variety in them, and they copied one another; but they are neatly made and of clear design, and so delighted the French public of the seventeenth century. "Lully's overtures," says La Viéville, "are of a symphonic order almost unknown to the Italians; and beside him their best masters seem to be nothing but little boys." "A great mark of their perfection," he adds (and the remark is very characteristic), "is that they can be felt (that is to say, heard) on all sorts of instruments." An amateur went so far as to write words to fit the first movement of the *Bellérophon* overture. "Although all the violin airs that M. de Lully composed for that opera are admirable," says the *Mercure Galant* in May 1679, "this one is particularly well thought of. *And as you will probably have remembered it in order to sing*

it, I am giving you some verses which have been fitted to it by a person of quality :

"Soupirez, mais sans espérer,
Mon cœur, c'est à présent assez de l'adorer. . . ."[1]

And indeed the verses are well enough suited to the music.

We must remark the words " As you will probably have remembered it in order to sing it " ; for they show us what was understood by instrumental music at that time. One of the secrets of the success of Lully's first overtures was that they were melodic and of such singing quality that they were easily remembered.

These overtures continued to delight French people in the eighteenth century. J. J. Rousseau, in a supposed letter from an instrumentalist at the Académie Royale de Musique to his friends in the orchestra, writes :

" At last, dear friends, we triumph—the clowns have been sent away. We shall shine anew in M. Lulli's symphonies. . . . What has become of those happy days when people fainted with joy at the famous *Isis* overture, and when the sound of the first stroke of our bows rose to the skies with the plaudits of the audience ? "

This instrumental form was spread abroad in an extraordinary way in foreign countries. Rousseau writes in his *Dictionnaire*, under the heading

[1] Sigh, my heart, but without hope ;
For the moment adoration shall suffice.

Ouverture : " Lully's overtures were often used as introductions to Roman and Neapolitan operas played in Italy. Later, they were printed at the beginning of the scores of these Italian operas without the author's name." Lully's form of overture found a field very favourable to its development in Germany. It was introduced by Lully's own pupils : by Cousser, G. Muffat, and Johannes Fischer. It maintained its glory in orchestral suites with masters such as J. P. Krieger, Telemann, and J. S. Bach, until the middle of the eighteenth century ; though in France, the country of its origin, it had for some time been ousted by Corelli's concertos.

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There was another sort of symphony in Lully's operas ; and it is rarely spoken of, although it is almost the purest and most beautiful part of his work. It was a sort of wide-spreading landscape—an inner landscape—the painting of a moral atmosphere about a scene. This kind of symphony was embodied in the piece, and " played its part," as the abbé Du Bos says ; and he quotes examples from *Atys*, and a symphony called *Logistille* from the fifth act of *Roland*. " They remind one," he continues, " of the thoughts which Cicero and Quintilian said the Pythagoreans used for meditation, to still their turbulent minds before putting their heads on the pillow."[1] It is not descriptive

[1] Abbé Du Bos, *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture.*

music, but music which suggests certain states of mind. And Du Bos, in a singular piece of writing which does honour to the musical criticism of his day, analyses the symphony *Logistille* from this point of view. Du Bos's views of music may be expressed by *Ut pictura musica;* or Music is an imitation[1]—taking the word "imitation" in the large sense of "mental imitation." He undertakes to prove that the *Logistille* in *Roland* is a truthful imitation, and writes as follows:

> "It is not silence which best calms an over-excited imagination.[2] Reasoning and experience teach us that certain sounds will do that better than silence itself. These sounds are like those in *Logistille*, which are almost uniform in movement, not greatly raising or lowering their tone, or varying their pace; so that the air generally progresses by close intervals. It would seem that these steady tones, following in intonation and movement a leisurely and uniform course, are better calculated to restore troubled spirits to tranquillity and the even tenor of their way, than a silence which would leave them free to pursue the strained and tumultuous course into which they have been driven."[3]

Others of these symphonies have a more descriptive character. They represent, for example, the groaning of the earth or the whistling of the wind

[1] *Ibid.*, I, 460.

[2] He is thinking here of Roland, when his reason is returning.

[3] *Ibid.*, I, 456–7.

when Apollo provokes Pythia in *Bellérophon* or in *Proserpine*.[1] But even here the composer does not pretend to reproduce these noises; for "they are noises no one has ever heard." The model here was lacking if an imitation was wanted. So Lully simply sought, as Du Bos says, to produce an effect something like our own ideas of things, by means of his melody, his harmony, and his rhythm. It was a matter of suggesting scenes and not of reproducing them. The important point, however, is that in every case these symphonic fragments are not pure music, and should not be taken as such, or they will be imperfectly understood. Du Bos claims that "they would only moderately please as sonatas or separate pieces," and that their value is in "their relation to the action of the opera."[2]

One may say the same of Lully's marches, which although they seem to need consideration as works of pure music, are nevertheless closely bound up with the action of his operas; both because they are related to particular movements and developments in a scene, and because they not only pretend, but have really the power to communicate the enthusiasm of the warlike heroes of the play to the audience. Nothing had a more powerful effect on

[1] We quoted earlier the famous scene in *Isis*, where Lully tried, according to his contemporaries, to evoke "the moaning of the wind in winter-time, blowing through the doors of a great house."

[2] I need hardly say that Du Bos is exaggerating a quite correct idea, and that though pages like *Logistille* and Symphonies of "Sleep" and "Silence" were written to achieve a definite effect, yet musically they are admirable, and have the finish and delicacy of touch and serenity of Händel.

Lully's public than his marches and warlike symphonies. La Viéville says:

> "The Italians yield the palm to us in the matter of marches and warlike symphonies. Those of their own composing are furious and fierce, but are lacking in nobility and martial fire."

Thus he does not deny the Italian *furia;* and he even recognizes the superiority of the Italians in depicting tempests and anger. Lully's apologist here finds himself in agreement with Lully's detractor, the abbé Raguenet, who wrote: "The Italian symphonies move the senses, the imagination, and the soul, so strongly that the musicians who play them cannot help being carried away and catching their fury; and they torment their violins and their bodies, and behave as though they were possessed." But to the majority of French people —and their taste was law nearly all over Europe— this seemed a weakness and not a virtue. This disorderly "fury" had nothing in common with the power born of reason and will and robust health. To the contemporaries of Louis XIV a force filled with "nobility and martial fire" (as La Viéville says) seemed to emanate from Lully's marches and warlike symphonies. They attained a European fame. When the prince of Orange wanted a march for his troops, he went to Lully, who wrote him one. And so—strange fact though it is—the armies that marched against France and the armies of France herself both tramped to the

sound of Lully's music. Again, in the eighteenth century, the abbé Du Bos, writing in Rameau's time, says : " The noise of fighting in *Thesée*[1] would have produced an extraordinary effect on the people of olden times. . . . Do we not ourselves," he adds, " feel how these symphonies rouse us . . . and influence us very much as Corneille's verses would ? "

Here, then, is the heroic side of Lully's genius, which has escaped the notice of adverse critics like Boileau, who persistently denied that Lully ever expressed himself in a sublime or courageous manner. But he was wrong ; for the martial vigour of Lully's music was one of the elements that went to make his popularity.

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There remain the dances ; and of all Lully's work these have perhaps received least notice ; for they have been lost sight of in the multitude of old dances. And yet contemporaries saw a revolution in them ; and where we see pure music, they saw a dramatic pantomime.

[1] Du Bos is probably speaking of " The March of the High Priests and Warriors, bearing the standards and spoils taken from their conquered enemies," in the first act of *Thesée*. It is a scene of admirable fullness—a sort of march of Louis XIV's victorious army.

More sumptuous still is the scene and march in the third act of *Cadmus*, depicting the sacrifice to Mars. M. Reynaldo Hahn justly calls it " a fine decorative fragment conceived after the manner of Le Brun." In its magnificent solemnity it has the character of an animated epic poem, and is filled with an heroic gladness.

See also, in the first act of *Amadis*, the *Marche pour le combat de la Barrière* and the air of *Les Combattants*.

It must be remembered that Lully to the end of his days remained to the general public what he had been when he made his début—that is a composer of ballets. And until the end of the reign his ballets were danced at court, despite the general opinion, which thought that the king should cease dancing in public after *Britannicus*. But the king went on dancing; and even when he was forty-six years old he danced a *Nymphe* in the *Eglogue de Versailles*, which was given at Versailles in 1685.

It was not only the general public, but enlightened critics like Muffat and Du Bos who thought Lully's dances the most original of his inventions. Georg Muffat has left us minute information concerning their execution in the second part of his *Florilegium*, which was published in 1698.[1] He says: "The manner of executing Lully's clever dance airs for stringed orchestra gained the applause and admiration of the whole world; and in truth they were such a wonderful invention that one can scarcely imagine anything more charming, more elegant, or more finished." And he speaks of them as a delight to the ear, the eye, and the mind. He makes a lengthy study of Lully's orchestra, remarking on its fine vigorous attack, its purity of tone, its unity, its exact sense of rhythm, its graceful rendering of ornaments, for which precision of execution seems to him as necessary in Lully's music, as it was to Couperin in the performance of his own compositions; for, says Muffat, "the true ornaments

[1] The first part of his *Bermerkungen: Angenehmerer Instrumental-Tanzmusik*.

in Lully's music are derived from the purest sources of song." He considers, in short, that these qualities —lightness, ease of execution, vigour, variety of rhythm, grace, and exquisite tenderness—all combined to make perfection.

Muffat only spoke of instrumental execution, and said nothing about the spirit of the dances, and the revolution that Lully effected. Du Bos will help us here.

Lully put life into his dances; that was the beginning of his reform.[1] All witnesses agree on this point. They talk of "rapid airs" which took the place of the old slow movements. However, this idea of a revolution may be thought debatable, and we had better consider it. It is not a case of crediting Lully with the invention of new musical forms; for the lively airs of the sixteenth century were still in existence. Lully simply opposed the tendency of the time to perform dances too slowly, at least in the theatre. He did not create either the minuet, the gavotte, or the bourrée, which were dances of French origin that had been perfected long before his time; but he doubtless put more life into them, and took them in quicker time. He had, moreover, a predilection for lively and jerky dances like the jig, the *canari*, and the *forlane*. People at the time said that he turned dancing into buffoonery. To

[1] I am not speaking of the great reform in the history of the dance, which was so slow in coming—the introduction of women into the ballets. Until *Proserpine*, in 1680, there were only men dancers in the ballets. The first women dancers appeared two months after the production of *Proserpine*, in a little masterpiece called *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*.

understand Lully's music, however, we must not forget that he put his Italian vivacity into its execution. For more rapid movements new dance figures were needed. Du Bos says: "Lully himself was obliged to arrange the *entrées* which he wished danced to his airs. He arranged the steps and figures of the *entrée* of the chaconne in *Cadmus*, because Beauchamps, the ballet-master, did not enter into the character of the violin air according to his taste."

But this was only a matter of seeing that the dances did not make the opera heavy, of interpolating them so that they did not too greatly retard the action. Lully wished by degrees to make them part of the action. "The success of the rapid airs," says Du Bos, "led Lully to compose characteristic airs; that is to say, airs whose melody and rhythm imitate the style of the kind of music that one imagines to be appropriate to certain people in certain circumstances."

It was thus a striving after local colour, a particular sort of dramatic touch that Lully tried to give his dances. According to Du Bos, such were the violin airs to which Hades dances in a scene in the fourth act of *Alceste*. "These airs breathe a calm and serious content, and, as Lully says himself, 'a veiled gladness.'" This apt expression, which would also apply to Gluck's *Champs-Elysées* airs, perfectly expressed their atmosphere; and except in the rather jerky and angular rhythm, which is one of Lully's characteristics, the scene has many likenesses to Gluck's scenes on the same subject, and the musical sentiment expressed is very

similar. The "characterized" airs do not simply express joy and sorrow, like other airs; "they express these emotions," says Du Bos, "in a particular way, conformable to what I should call an individual character." By that we understand that they aimed at more than general truth of expression, and tried to give psychological precision to some particular character or dramatic situation. Here again Lully was obliged to arrange the steps and figures for these airs "of marked character." "Six months before he died he himself composed the ballet which he wished danced by the Cyclops in *Polyphemus*."[1]

At length, in the course of transforming ballet into drama, he evolved "airs danced in a characteristic way"; that is to say, ballets which were scarcely danced at all—"ballets with hardly any dance steps," as Du Bos says, "but composed of gestures and demonstrations—in brief, dumb show." Such were the funeral ballets in *Psyché*, and those in the second act of *Thesée*, "where the poet introduces old men who dance." Such were also the ballets in the fourth act of *Atys*, and the first scene in the fourth act of *Isis*, "where Quinault brings the inhabitants of the hyperborean regions on to the stage." These "half-choruses," as Du Bos calls them, "these choruses in classic style, which do not speak, were executed by dancers who obeyed Lully implicitly, and dared not make a single step which he had forbidden, or forget their gestures, or make them out of time." Their evolutions were reminis-

[1] Du Bos: III, 169.

cent of classical tragedy rather than of modern ballet. "When one saw these dances, it was easy to understand how rhythm regulated the gestures of the ancient theatre. By imagination alone Lully's genius had conceived (for it is hardly likely that he knew anything of classic drama) how sadness might be expressed by the silent action of a chorus." Naturally the ballet-masters and famous dancers of the time did not understand what Lully was about; and so he had to go elsewhere for assistance. He was especially helped by the ballet-master d'Olivet, who collaborated with him in arranging the funeral ballets in *Alceste* and *Psyché*, the dances in *Thesée*, the *Songes funestes* (Fatal Dreams) in *Atys*, and the *Frileux* (Chilly People) in *Isis*. "This last ballet was composed entirely of the gestures and demonstrations of people chilled with cold. There was not a single step of ordinary dancing in it." The dancers which Lully and d'Olivet engaged were all young people, chosen while they were still novices and before they had been spoiled by the habits of their calling.

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VI

THE GRANDEUR AND POPULARITY OF LULLY'S ART

There were thus many different elements in Lully's opera: ballet-comedy, court airs, popular airs, recitative-drama, pantomimes, dances, and symphonies—a mixture of the old and the new.

One would say his work was very heterogeneous if one thought only of the elements that composed it, and not of the mind that controlled it all. But by the astonishing coherence of Lully's mind he made a kind of block of his materials, a strong erection, where every sort of substance seemed embedded in mortar and an integral part of his singular edifice. It is the edifice as a whole which must be admired. If Lully has greatness, and merits a high place among the masters of art, it is not because he was a poet-musician, but rather a musician-architect. His operas are well and solidly constructed, though they have not that organic harmony which characterizes Wagner's dramas and the operas of our own time ; all of which are more or less directly evolved from the symphony, and make us feel, from beginning to end, that the themes grow and ramify like a tree and its branches. Instead of a living unity in Lully we have a dead unity—a unity born of reason, of a fine and well-balanced sense of proportion—a Roman construction. Think of the shapeless constructions of Cavalli and Cesti, and the whole of Venetian opera—collections of airs piled up anyhow, where each act is like a drawer into which as many objects as possible have been crammed, one on the top of another ! We therefore understand Saint-Évremond—who was not otherwise an indulgent critic—when he says : " I shall not do Baptiste the dishonour of comparing his operas with Venetian operas." There may be more musical genius in one of Cavalli's beautiful airs than in the whole of Lully's work ; but we must

remember that Cavalli's genius squandered itself. Lully had the fine quality of our classic century—he knew how to dispose his talents, and he had a sense of order and composition.[1]

Lully's works seem like buildings with clear and dignified lines. They have a majestic peristyle and a great portico of strong, lifeless-looking columns—in the shape of a heavy overture and an allegorical prologue, round which the orchestra, the voices, and the dances group themselves. Now and then an overture may give access to the peristyle within the temple itself. In the inner part of the opera a clever balance is held between the different dramatic elements—between the "spectacle" on the one hand (and by that I mean the ballet, the concert airs, and the interludes) and the drama on the other. As Lully became more master of his work, he tried not only to harmonize its different elements, but to unite them, and establish a certain relationship between them. For example, in the fourth act of *Roland* he gets dramatic feeling out of a pastoral interlude. The scene is a village wedding, with hautboys, choruses, shepherds and shepherdesses, concerted duets, and rustic dances; and, quite naturally, the shepherds talk among themselves in Roland's presence, and tell the story of Angelica, who has just gone off with Médor. The contrast between the quiet songs and Roland's fury has great dramatic effect; and it has often been made use of

[1] Lully's forerunners, so far as method and construction, and the marshalling of musical and scenic means were concerned, were the musicians of the Barberini opera at Rome before 1650—D. Mazzocchi, Landi, and Vittori.

since. More than that, Lully cleverly tried to introduce progressive musical and dramatic effects in his opera. Possibly he remembered a criticism of *Atys* which complained that the first act was "too beautiful"; for towards the end of his career he wrote *Armide*, "a supremely beautiful piece of work," says La Viéville, "with a beauty that increases in every act. It is Lully's *Rodogune*.... I do not know how the human mind could imagine anything finer than the fifth act."

Generally speaking, Lully endeavoured to bring his operas to as decisive and solemn a conclusion as possible, in choruses, dances, and apotheosis. He was not afraid on occasions to finish up with a dramatic solo (like that in the fifth act of *Armide*, or the fourth act of *Roland*) when the character of the situation was strong enough to carry it off.[1]

All his work is eminently theatrical, though it may not be always good drama. Lully had an instinct for dramatic effect in the theatre; and we have remarked that the chief beauty of his symphonies, and even of his overtures, lies, as Du Bos and Marpurg say, in the use he makes of them. When taken out of their places they lose a great deal of their meaning. I think also that their beauty was due in an extraordinary degree to the implicit obedience on the part of the performers

[1] I do not forget the fine construction of his libretti. We have already remarked his method of collaborating with Quinault; but there is no doubt that whether the verses were by Quinault or Thomas Corneille, the construction of the scenes and the acts, and to a certain extent the characters, was carried out by Lully.

to the commands of their conductor. The music is written with so keen an eye to particular effects, that there is a likelihood of its losing its force under the direction of anyone but the composer. What Gluck said about his own music may be applied to Lully's art:

> "The presence of the composer is, so to speak, as necessary to his work as the sun is necessary to the works of nature: he is its soul and life, and without him all is confusion and chaos."

It is also very nearly certain that the feeling for this art has been lost to a great extent. It was lost soon after Lully's death, although his operas continued to be played for nearly another century. The most understanding of the critics agreed that people did not know how to perform his music when he was not there. The abbé Du Bos writes:

> "Those who saw Lully's operas performed during his lifetime say that there was in them an expressiveness which is no longer found to-day. We recognize Lully's songs quite well; but the spirit that used to animate them has gone. The recitatives seem soulless, and the ballet airs leave us almost unmoved. The performance of his operas takes longer now than when he directed them himself; although they should take a shorter time, because many of the violin airs are no longer repeated, as they used to be. The actors no longer pay attention to Lully's rhythm, but take liberties with it either through incapacity or presumption."[1]

[1] Du Bos: *Réflexions Critiques*, III, 318.

Rousseau confirms this opinion, and in his *Lettre sur la musique française* says: "Lully's recitative was rendered by actors in the seventeenth century quite differently from what it is now. It was then livelier and less spun out; it was less sung and more declaimed." Like Du Bos, he also notes that the operas in his time took much longer to perform, "according to the unanimous opinion of all those who had seen them in the old days; and whenever they are reproduced now, it is necessary to make considerable cuts."

It must not be forgotten that musical execution became heavier in style between the time of Lully's death and Gluck's appearance; and this perverted the character of Lully's music, and was also one of the causes—and not the least—of Rameau's comparative failure.

What form, then, did the true interpretation of Lully's work take? We know from Lecerf de la Viéville that Lully taught his singers a lively but not extravagant manner of singing recitative, so that it was something like natural speech. Also Muffat tells us that Lully's orchestra played in strict time, with rigorous accuracy, with perfect balance, and with great delicacy; and that the dances were so lively that they were spoken of as "buffoonery." Strict time, accuracy, liveliness, delicacy—such were the characteristics noted by connoisseurs in the operatic work of the orchestra and artistes at the end of the seventeenth century.

And this is how Rousseau, in the second part of his *Nouvelle Heloïse*, speaks of the performance of

these same operas. The singing he calls noisy and discordant bellowing; the orchestra, an endless clatter, an eternal and wearisome purring, without melody or rhythm, and shamefully out of tune;[1] and the dances are described as solemn and interminable.[2] Thus we have want of rhythm, want of life, and want of delicacy—all of which is the exact opposite of what Lully realized.

I can only come to the conclusion, therefore, that when people judge Lully to-day they commit the grave error of judging him according to the false traditions of the eighteenth century, which had gone altogether in the wrong direction; and in this way he has been made responsible for the heaviness and coarseness of interpretations formed—or deformed—by his successors.

. . . . . .

In spite of this misinterpretation (or, who knows? because of it, for glory often rests on a misunderstanding), Lully's fame was great. It spread over all countries and, what was almost unique in the history of French music, it reached all classes of society.

Foreign musicians came to put themselves under Lully's tuition. "His operas," says La Viéville,

[1] "The rhythm is always ready to elude them. . . . All is so badly out of tune as to shock the least sensitive of ears."

[2] At the beginning of the eighteenth century Lecerf de la Viéville tells us that they occupied a quarter of the whole opera, and that Lully would not have allowed the dancing to take up so much time.

" attracted Italian admirers, who came to live in Paris. Teobaldo di Gatti, who played a five-stringed bass violin, was one of them; and he composed an opera called *Scilla* that was esteemed for its fine symphonies." Jean-Sigismond Cousser, who was the friend and counsellor of Rheinhard Keiser, the talented creator of German opera at Hamburg, spent six years in Paris at Lully's school; and when he returned to Germany, he carried the Lully traditions with him, and introduced them into the conducting of orchestras and musical composition.[1] Georg Muffat also stayed six years in Paris; and this excellent master was so strongly impressed by Lully that his compatriots reproached him for it.[2] Johann Fischer was a copyist of music in Lully's service. I do not know if the solemn and stirring Erlebach knew Lully personally, as is generally supposed; but in any case he had an intimate knowledge of his style, and used to write overtures " after the French manner." Eitner has endeavoured to show Lully's influence on Händel, and even on Bach.[3] As for Keiser, there is no doubt that Lully was one of his models. In England, the Stuarts did all they could to acclimatize French opera. Charles II vainly tried to bring Lully to

[1] In 1682 he published in Stuttgart, as M. Michel Brenet shows, a book on *The Composition of Music according to the French Method.*

[2] See the preface to the *Florilegium* by G. Muffat, published in 1695 at Augsburg, and recently reprinted in the first volume of *Die Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Œsterreich.*

[3] R. Eitner, *Die Vorgänger Bach's und Händel's* (*Monatshefte*, 1883).

London; and he sent Pelham Humfrey, and one or two talented English musicians of the seventeenth century, to Paris to improve themselves under his direction. It is true that Humfrey died too young to develop his gifts to the full; but he was one of Purcell's masters, who thus indirectly benefited from Lully's teaching. In Holland, Christian Huygens' correspondence shows the attraction of Lully's opera; and it has already been mentioned that when the prince of Orange wanted a march for his troops he applied to Lully. "Both Holland and England," says La Viéville, "were full of French singers."

In France Lully's influence on composers was not limited to the theatre, but exercised on every kind of music. D'Anglebert's *Book of the Harpsichord*, published in 1689, contains transcriptions of Lully's operas;[1] and the triumph of the opera no doubt led composers of harpsichord music to try their hand at the description of character. The style of organ music underwent similar changes.

Besides musicians, amateurs and people at court also felt the spell of Lully's charm. In looking through Mme de Sevigné's letters, one is surprised, not only at the admiration which this enthusiastic marquise lavishes on Lully, but—what is more astonishing—at the quotations she gives from passages in his operas. One feels that she had a well-stored memory. She was not a musician,

[1] *Pièces de clavessin avec la manière de les jouer; diverses chaconnes, ouvertures et autre airs de M. de Lully, mis sur cet instrument*, 1689.

however, and only represented the average dilettante; if phrases of Lully's operas were always running in her head, it meant that the people about her were always singing them.

And indeed Arnauld, horrified by Quinault's wanton verses, writes: "The worst is that the poison of these lascivious songs is not confined to the place where they are sung; it is spread abroad through the whole of France, for numbers of people labour to learn these songs by heart, and take pleasure in singing them wherever they may be." [1]

I shall not speak of Saint-Évremond's well-known comedy, *Les Opera*, which gives us Mlle Crisotine, a young girl who has gone mad through reading operas; and M. Tirsolet, a young man from Lyons, who has also gone mad through too much opera. "I returned to Paris," says M. Guillaut, "about four months after the first performance at the Opera. The women and young people already knew the music by heart, and there is hardly a household whose members cannot sing whole scenes. Nothing is talked of but *Cadmus*, *Alceste*, *Thesée*, or *Atys*. They are always asking for *Roi de Scyros*, of which I am very tired; there is also a *Lycas peu discret*, which annoys me very much; while *Atys est trop heureux* and *Les bienheureux Phrygiens* drives me to despair."

It is true Saint-Évremond's comedy followed Lully's first operas, during the first phase of people's

[1] Letter from Arnauld to Perrault, in May 1694, just before his death.

infatuation for them. But the infatuation continued:

"Le Francais, pour lui seul contraignant sa nature,
N'a que pour l'opéra de passion qui dure,"[1]

wrote La Fontaine to De Niert, about 1677.

But the world continued to sing Lully's airs:

"Et quiconque n'en chante, ou bien plutôt n'en gronde
Quelque récitatif, n'a pas l'air du beau monde."[2]

In 1688, La Bruyère, when drawing the portrait of a man of fashion, said: "Who knows how to sing a whole dialogue from the opera, and all Roland's passion, in a boudoir, as he does?"

There is doubtless nothing surprising in the fact that people of fashion were infatuated by Lully; but it is surprising that the general public and the common people found even greater delight in the music than the aristocrats. La Viéville notes the

[1] The Frenchman restrains his nature for that alone, and only for opera finds a lasting passion.

La Fontaine shows himself to be the enemy of opera in this *Épître*, and speaks of his preference for the more restrained and delicate style of chamber-music:

"Le téorbe charmant, qu'on ne vouloit entendre
Que dans une ruelle, avec une voix tendre,
Pour suivre et soutenir par des accords touchants
De quelques airs choisis les mélodieux chants. . . "

(No one wished to hear the sound of the theorbo
Except in a boudoir, with a gentle voice
Singing melodious songs, to the moving harmony
Of some chosen air.)

La Fontaine strove to write operas; and he produced one called *Astrée*, with music by Colasse, which was, however, unsuccessful.

[2] And whoever does not sing, or rather roar out
Some kind of recitative, is not in the fashion.

transports of the opera public for Lully's work; and he is astonished at the correctness of their taste. "The people must have infallible instinct," he remarks, "when they admire what is really fine in Lully." Further he says:

> "Several times in Paris, when the duet from the fourth act of *Persée* was being sung, I have seen the audience so attentive that they remained motionless for a quarter of an hour, with their eyes fixed on Phineas and Merope; and then when the duet was over they would testify by an inclination of the head how much pleasure it had given them."[1]

The charm of the opera extended far beyond the opera-house. Lully's airs were sung in the humblest houses, and in the very kitchens where he himself had worked. La Viéville says that the air, *Amour, que veux-tu de moi?* from *Amadis* was sung by every cook in France.

> "His songs were so natural and of such insinuating charm," writes Titon du Tillet, "that if anybody had a love of music and a good ear, he could remember them quite easily at the fourth or fifth hearing; so that both persons of distinction and ordinary people sang the greater part of his operatic airs. It is said that Lully was delighted to hear his songs sung on the Pont-

[1] See especially the passage, quoted before on page 208, where La Viéville describes the impression made on the audience by the great scene where Armida wishes to stab Reynold in his sleep.

Neuf and at street corners, with other words than those in the opera. And as he was of an odd turn of mind, he would sometimes have his coach stopped and call the singer and violinist to him, in order to give them the exact time of the air they were playing."

His airs were sung in the streets and played upon instruments, and even his overtures were sung to words adapted to them. Others of his airs became popular songs, some of them being already of that nature; and thus, as his music came partly from the people, so it returned to them.

Generally speaking, it may be said that Lully's music came from many sources; it was the reunion of different streams flowing from very different regions; and so found itself at home with all classes. The great variety of these sources is one more similarity between Lully's art and Gluck's. But the tributary streams of Gluck's music flowed from different countries; from Germany, Italy, France, and even England; and, thanks to this cosmopolitan formation, Gluck was really a European musician. The constituent elements of Lully's music are almost entirely French, and French in every kind of way, being composed of vaudevilles, court airs, ballet-comedies, tragic declamation, and such like. The only Italian part about him was his character. I do not think we have had many other musicians who were more French; and he is the only musician in France who preserved his popularity throughout an entire century. For he

reigned in opera after death as he had done during life;[1] and as he kept Charpentier[2] back during his lifetime, so he was a stumbling-block to Rameau after his death; and he continued to make himself felt in Gluck's time and after it. His vogue belonged to old France and the æsthetics of old France; and his reign was that of the French tragedy from which opera sprang, and which, in the eighteenth century, opera fashioned to its own likeness. One understands the reaction against that art in the name of a freer French art, which had existed before that time, and which might otherwise have blossomed forth.[3]

But it must not be said, as people are inclined to say to-day, that the faults in Lully's art are the faults of a foreigner and an Italian, and that they

[1] There is a weakening in Lullyism at the time of Rameau's grand operas. *Isis*, *Cadmus*, *Atys*, *Phaéton*, and *Persée* disappeared; but the others still held on; and *Thesée* attested the tremendous vitality of Lully's work. It held the stage until after the production of Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride*, that is for one hundred and four years, from 1675 to 1779.

[2] "Charpentier, the Italian," as his contemporaries called him (La Viéville, p. 347). In our own day people have tried, and quite wrongly, to compare him with Lully, as a type of true French musician. But Lully was admired because he represented the French traditions of Lambert and Boësset, as opposed to Charpentier's Italianism.

[3] This is only a supposition. For my part, I think that this earlier art would have disappeared even if Lully had not been born. M. J. Écorcheville's essays on the French musicians of the "Manuscrit de Cassel" show how anarchy and uncertainty was corroding French music about 1660. There was only Dumanoir to take Lully's place. In spite of their undeniable talent, the masters were ruined by their own weakness, and not by Lully's power. For what genius was ever able to kill the development of an artistic school, if that school had the least vitality? In art it is only dead people that get killed.

hindered the development of French music.[1] They are French faults. There is not one France, but two or three, which are engaged in a perpetual conflict. Lully belongs to the France which, through her great classic masters, produced the dignified and thoughtful art that is known to the whole world—an art that has been evolved at the expense of the exuberant, unruly, and rather slovenly art of the age that preceded it. To condemn Lully's opera as not French would be to run the risk of condemning Racine's tragedy as well; for Lully's opera is the reflection of that tragedy, and, like it, is the free and popular expression of the French mind. It is to the glory of France that his multiple soul did not limit itself to one ideal only; for the important thing is, not that this ideal should be ours, but that it should be great.

I have tried to show in these notes (which are necessarily a sketchy and rather incomplete survey of a very vast subject) that Lully's work in art was, like classic tragedy and the noble gardens of Versailles, a monument of that vigorous age which was the summer of our race.

[1] There is no similarity between Lully's style and that of the Italian masters of opera of his day—masters like Stradella, Scarlatti, and Bononcini. An artist like Stradella is in all his qualities and faults the exact opposite of Lully. Lully was the Frenchest Frenchman of his time, and that was the reason of his success in France.

GLUCK

SOME REMARKS ON "ALCESTE"

"ALCESTE" was not a success when first produced in Paris, on April 23, 1776. One of Gluck's friends, the printer Corancez, went to look for Gluck in the wings of the theatre in order to condole with him; and he gives us the following curious account of the meeting:

"I joined Gluck in the corridor, and found him more concerned with trying to find reasons for what seemed to him an extraordinary happening than worried about the failure of his piece. 'The failure of such a piece is very odd,' he said, 'and will be an epoch in the history of your country's taste. I can imagine a piece composed in some particular musical style succeeding or not succeeding—it would be a matter of the audience's variable taste. I can also imagine a piece of that kind having an enormous success at first, and then quickly falling out of favour in the presence, so to speak, and with the consent, of its first admirers. But I admit I am bothered to know why a piece should fail when it is stamped with the truth of nature, and when all the passions have their true expression. *Alceste,*' he added proudly, 'is not the kind of work to give momentary

pleasure or to please because it is new. Time does not exist for it ; and I claim that it will give equal pleasure two hundred years hence, if the French language does not change. My reason is that the piece is founded upon nature and has nothing whatever to do with fashion.' "[1]

I thought of these splendid words and of their justification as I listened one evening to the enthusiastic applause at the Opéra-Comique,[2] after the temple scene—a scene built on noble lines, filled with fierce burning passions, moulded like an imperishable bronze, *ære perennius*—the masterpiece,

[1] *Journal de Paris* (August 1788).

[2] I will make two observations on the subject of the interpretation of Gluck's music in our modern theatres.

The first has to do with the orchestra. I should like to hear the rhythm of Gluck's music more strongly marked. Gluck constantly made use of emphatic and precise rhythms, after the manner of Händel ; and they can hardly be too strongly accentuated. It must be remembered that his art was expressly intended for a vast building and a large public. Thus, relatively speaking, it does not need great delicacy of treatment ; for it is bold and insistent in design and broad in style ; and it was the emphasis of his accents that especially struck his contemporaries.

The second observation has to do with the ballets. At the Opéra-Comique, for an interlude in the second act, the dances of the second and third acts were blended ; and they were blended very happily, so that a more finished performance could hardly have been given. But I regretted, nevertheless, that the ballet which used to finish the opera had been taken from its original place. The custom of modern opera is to finish up in full action. But this was not the custom of the old opera (see *Orphée*, or *Iphigénie en Aulide*) ; for there, when the tragedy was over, the spirits of the audience were comforted with pleasant music, or beautiful dancing, or quiet songs. This helped to give these works the character of a serene and gracious dream. Why should we not go back to that idea ? I think it is on a higher plane than our own.

to my mind, not only of musical tragedy, but of tragedy itself.

And the effect of such a scene, built about a famous antique, is quite as impressive as that in the second act, even though it is less unexpected. The scene represents Alcestis restraining her tears and her terror at the thought of approaching death, amid the feasting which celebrates Admetus's recovery; and in it we have great variety and freedom of melodic form, and an harmonious blending of stirring recitative, with short phrases of song, delicate ariettas, tragic airs, and dances and choruses, which are beyond praise in the matter of life, grace, and balance. After one hundred years they seem as fresh as the first day they were produced.

The third act is less perfect. In spite of moments of inspiration, it rather weakly repeats the situations of the second act, without breaking much fresh ground; moreover, the part of Hercules is commonplace in conception, and is probably not Gluck's composition at all.[1]

The work as a whole has, nevertheless, unity of style, and a purity of art and emotion worthy of the finest Greek tragedies; and it often evokes a remembrance of the incomparable *Œdipus Rex*. Even to-day, among the many dull and pedantic operas encumbered with loquacious rhetoric, with

[1] Up till now, Hercules' air, *C'est en vain que l'Enfer*, has been declared apocryphal, and attributed to Gossec. M. Wotquenne has just decided it should be given back to Gluck, and shows its resemblance to an air from *Ezio* (1750), *Ecco alle mie catene*. But Gossec was a great admirer of Gluck, so why should he not have been inspired by one of his old airs?

pretentious and everyday situations, with oratorical expatiations and sentimental foolishness—all of which is as tiresome as the dreadful witticisms of the eighteenth-century opera anterior to Gluck—even to-day, *Alceste* remains the model of musical drama as it ought to be, of a standard that has hardly been reached by the finest of musicians, even by Wagner himself; and, let us be frank, Gluck himself rarely attains this high level.

Alceste is Gluck's chief work, and the one in which he is most conscious of his dramatic reform; it is the work in which he has most rigorously followed the principles that were antagonistic to his temperament and his early education—principles which, with the exception of one or two scenes, are not apparent in *Iphigénie en Tauride*. *Alceste* shows Gluck's most careful work, for in it, contrary to his usual custom, we find no borrowings from his other compositions.[1] It was the work over which he spent most time, for he wrote it twice over; and the second edition—the French edition—is less pure in some respects, though more dramatic in others, and is at all events quite different from the first.[2]

[1] I am referring to the Italian *Alceste*, played at Vienna in 1767; for in the French *Alceste* of 1776, Gluck borrowed from *Antigone*, *Paride ed Elena*, and *Feste d'Apollo*, though not to any great extent, and chiefly from dances, and choruses with dances.

[2] The second and the third acts are quite different. In the Italian version the second act takes place in Hades, and shows us Alcestis, instead of Orpheus, in the presence of the gods of the lower regions, taking a vow that she will die. Then Alcestis returns to earth to say farewell to Admetus. The third act, where Hercules does not appear, is worked out by introducing Apollo's intervention.

We will therefore take this "tragedy put into music"[1] as the best example of Gluck's powers of conception and of his dramatic reform; and I wish to take this opportunity of examining the causes of the movement which revived the whole of the musical drama of that time. I should like especially to show how this revolution corresponded with the trend of thought of the whole epoch and how inevitable it was, and from whence came the force that broke down the obstacles that had been heaped up by routine.

I

Gluck's revolution—and it is that which makes him such a force—was not due to Gluck's genius alone, but to a whole century of thought as well. It had been prepared, foretold, and awaited by the Encyclopædists for twenty years.

This fact is not sufficiently well known in France. Musicians and critics have, for the greater part, set too much store on Berlioz's fantastic sayings:

> "O philosophers and prodigious fools! O old fogies and worthy men, who as people of intellect in a philosophical century wrote on musical

[1] Note the difference in the titles given by Gluck to his works. His first Italian operas are known by the name, usual at that time, of *dramma per musica* (drama in music), and that is also the title of *Paride ed Elena*. The Italian *Orfeo* of 1765 is called *azione teatrale per musica* (dramatic action in music); the Italian *Alceste* of 1767 is *tragedia messa in musica* (tragedy put into music); *Iphigénie en Aulide*, the French *Orphée*, and the French *Alceste*, are all "opera-tragedies"; *Armide* is an "heroic drama put into music"; and, lastly, *Iphigénie en Tauride* is a "tragedy put into music."

art without the least feeling for it, without any elementary knowledge of it, without knowing what it meant ! "[1]

It fell to the part of a German, Herr Eugen Hirschberg, to remind us of the importance of these " philosophers " in the history of music.[2]

The Encyclopædists loved music, and some of them knew a good deal about it. Those who took the most active part in discussions about music were Grimm, Rousseau, Diderot, and D'Alembert, who were all musicians. The least well-informed was Grimm, who was not, however, lacking in taste ; for he wrote little melodies, thoroughly appreciated Grétry, discovered Cherubini's and Mehul's talents, and was even one of the first people to recognize Mozart's genius when he was only seven years old. So we must not underestimate him.

Rousseau is well enough known as a musician. He composed an opera, *Les Muses galantes ;* an *opéra-comique*, the too famous *Devin du Village ;* a collection of romances, *Les Consolations des Misères de ma Vie ;* and a " monodrama," *Pygmalion,* which was the first example of a " melodrama " (or opera without singers)—a form admired

[1] *Les Grotesques de la Musique.* It is true that Berlioz adds : " I am not including Rousseau, who at least had some elementary knowledge of music." Nevertheless, it was quite an error to take Rousseau as the best example of an Encyclopædist with a knowledge of musical art. D'Alembert and perhaps even Diderot were better informed than he.

[2] *Die Encyklopädisten und die französische Oper im 18 Jahrhundert* (Breitkopf, 1903). I have availed myself of the information in this excellent essay.

by Mozart and tried by Beethoven, Weber, Schumann, and Bizet.[1] Rousseau was, therefore, an innovator in music; although there is no need to attach much importance to his pleasant and rather commonplace compositions; which show, as Grétry says, not only "the hand of an unpractised artist, whose feeling reveals the rules of his art," but a man not accustomed to think in music and a poor maker of melody. We must be grateful, however, for his *Dictionary of Music*, which, in spite of its many errors, abounds in original and sound ideas. And, lastly, we must remember Grétry's and Gluck's opinion of him. Grétry had great confidence in his musical judgment; and in 1773 Gluck wrote:

> "I have studied this great man's works on music, including the letter in which he criticizes Lully's *Armide*, and I am filled with admiration at the depth of his knowledge and the sureness of his taste. I am strongly of the impression that if he had applied himself to the exercise of the art he writes about, he might have achieved the marvellous results of which, according to antiquity, music is capable."[2]

Diderot did not compose music, but had a very exact knowledge of it. The celebrated English historian of music, Burney, who came to see

[1] Rousseau's *Pygmalion* has been lately revived in Munich. See M. Jules Combarieu's study of this melodrama in the *Revue de Paris*, February 1901.

[2] I make allowance, of course, in these compliments, for exaggerations calculated to gain the favour of an influential critic.

him in Paris, esteemed his learning very highly.[1] Grétry used to ask his advice, and rewrote a melody in *Zémire et Azor* three times in order to satisfy him. His literary works, his prefaces, his admirable *Neveu de Rameau*, all show his passionate love of music and his luminous intelligence. He interested himself in researches in musical acoustics;[2] and the delightful dialogues, *Leçons de Clavecin et Principes d'Harmonie*, although they bear the name of Professor Bemetzrieder, clearly show his mark, or at any rate are witnesses of his teaching.

Of all the Encyclopædists, D'Alembert was the most musicianly. He wrote a great many books on music,[3] the principal being *Éléments de Musique théorique et pratique suivant les Principes de M. Rameau* (1752), which was translated into German in 1757 by Marpurg, and even won the admiration of Rameau himself,[4] and, in our own time, of Helmholtz. Not only did he throw more light on to

[1] Burney, *The Present State of Music in France and Italy* (1771). When Burney heard Mlle Diderot play he said that she was one of the most able pianists in Paris, and had an extraordinary knowledge of modulation. He adds this curious remark: "Although I had the pleasure of hearing her play for several hours, she did not play a single French piece. Her pieces were all either Italian or German, from which it is not difficult to see that her judgment in music is based on M. Diderot's opinion."

[2] *Principes généraux d'Acoustique* (1748).

[3] *Fragments sur l'Opéra* (1752); articles on "Fondamental" and "Gamme" in the Encyclopædia; *De la Liberté de la Musique* (1760); *Fragments sur la Musique en général et sur la nôtre en particulier* (1773); *Réflexions sur la Théorie de la Musique* (1777).

[4] Letter to the *Mercure de France*, May 1752.

Rameau's ideas (which were often confused), but he gave them a profundity which they did not really possess. No one was better fitted to understand Rameau, although later he came to disagree with him. It would be wrong to think of him as an amateur, for he was the enemy of amateurs, and the first to rail at those who talked about music without understanding it, as most Frenchmen did :

> " Such people when they talk about melodious music simply mean commonplace music which has been dinned in their ears a hundred times ; for these people a poor air is one which they cannot hum, and a bad opera is one in which they cannot learn the airs by heart."

One may be sure that D'Alembert paid particular attention to any harmonic novelties in Rameau ; for in his *Réflexions sur la Théorie de la Musique*, which was read before the Académie des Sciences, he set music on the way to new harmonic discoveries, and complained of the limited methods employed in the music of his time, and demanded that they should be enriched.

These doings must be recalled in order to show that the Encyclopædists were not mixed up with the musical warfare of that time in a casual way, as people are fond of saying they were. Moreover, if even they had not any special ability in music, the sincere judgment of men so clever and skilled in art as they would always carry great weight ; for if we put them on one side, what other opinions would be worth listening to ? It would be foolish for students

of musical history to reject the opinion of everyone who did not follow music as a profession ; it would mean confining music to a small circle and being dead to all that went on outside it. An art is only worthy of love and honour when it is a human art—an art that will speak to all men, and not only to a few pedants.

The breadth of Gluck's art was essentially human, and even popular (in the best sense of the word), in contrast to Rameau's ultra-aristocratic, but clever, art.

Rameau was fifty years old before he succeeded in getting his first opera, *Hippolyte et Aricie*, produced (1733) ; and his success was doubtful during the first ten years of his dramatic career. However, he conquered at last ; and, about 1749, at the time of *Platée*, he seemed to have united his supporters and disarmed his enemies, and was regarded by all as the greatest dramatic musician in Europe. But his triumph was short-lived ; for, three years later, his power was shaken ; and until his death, in 1764,[1] his unpopularity with critics steadily in-

[1] Gluck did not arrive in Paris until nine years later, in 1773. He has therefore nothing to do with the discredit into which Rameau's work fell, although people used to say he had. Rameau's day was done long before Gluck was known in France.

The first mention made of a work by Gluck being played in France is four years after Rameau's death. On February 2, 1768, as M. Michel Brenet remarks, a sacred concert was given, which included "a motet for solo voice, by His Imperial Majesty's famous and learned musician, M. le chevalier Gluck." Up till that time his name was not known in Paris, except in connection with a few little airs from his Italian operas—"parodies" set to French words, and introduced by Blaise in 1765 into the opéra-comique, *Isabelle et Gertrude*. (See *Les Concerts en France* by Michel Brenet.)

creased. That was an extraordinary occurrence; for though it is unhappily quite natural that an innovatory genius should only attain success after long years, or after a whole life of struggle, it is much more astonishing for a victorious genius not to maintain his conquest, and—where it is not a case of some fresh evolution in style or thought—to lose admiration almost as soon as he had gained it. How can we account for this change of opinion in the most enlightened and gifted men of his time?

The hostility of the Encyclopædists seems the more astonishing when we remember their early liking for French opera—some among them being very enthusiastic about it. And it is still more curious that Rousseau, who had liked it so well,[1] should afterwards, with his usual violence, oppose it most bitterly. In 1752 the performances by Italian low comedians of the little masterpieces of Pergolesi and the Neapolitan school came as a sudden shock to himself and his friends.[2] Diderot himself said that our music had been delivered from bondage by miserable buffoons. We may feel surprise at so small a cause producing such large results;

[1] He says so in his *Dictionary of Music*, in 1767: "For a long time I was very attracted by French music, and I was openly enthusiastic about it." A letter written to Grimm in 1750 shows that after his journey to Venice he still preferred French music to Italian. Even Grimm began by admiring Rameau; and in 1752 he said that Rameau was "often noble and always original in his recitatives, seizing on what was natural and sublime in each character." As for D'Alembert, he always paid homage to Rameau's grandeur, even when finding fault with him.

[2] The *Nouvelles littéraires* (a correspondence recently discovered by M. Prodhomme in a manuscript in the Library at Munich, and published in the *Recueil de la Société Inter-*

and a true musician would have difficulty in understanding how a little score like the *Serva padrona*, which consisted of forty pages of music, with five or six airs, a simple dialogue between two people, and a miniature orchestra, could hold Rameau's powerful work in check. It was certainly rather sad that his thoughtful work should be suddenly supplanted by a few pleasant Italian *intermezzi*. But the secret of the fascination of these little compositions was in their naturalness and easy grace, where no trace of effort was apparent. They were like a comforting intoxication; and the greater the triumph of the *Bouffons* became, the more Rameau's art was seen to be out of harmony with the spirit of the age, of which the Encyclopædists were the interpreters, bringing their customary exaggeration into every controversy.

Without following up the incidents of the struggle (which have been recounted so often), or dwelling on its enthusiastic injustices, I will try to make clear the æsthetic principles (which were also Gluck's), in whose name the campaign was conducted. Let me, first of all, begin by recalling its chief incidents.

Rousseau, stirred by the Italian productions,

nationale de Musique, July–September 1905) shows how French opera was suddenly ruined by Italian *intermezzi*.

"Italian music has entirely smothered ours; we may as well give up all our operas" (December 1754).

"The taste for Italian music has quite killed French music. People leave the opera to run to a concert where ultramontane pieces are being played" (May 1755).

"Our opera will never recover from the mortal blow which the introduction of Italian music has dealt it" (January 1756).

started the fight; and, with his usual lack of balance, developed an exasperated aversion for everything French. His *Lettre sur la Musique française*, in 1753, which in violence surpassed anything else that could ever have been written against French music, was the signal for the "guerre des bouffons." It must not be thought that this letter represented the Encyclopædists' frame of mind as a whole; for it was a very contradictory letter, and in its desire to prove too much, it proved nothing. D'Alembert says[1] that Rousseau made more enemies for himself and the Encyclopædia by this pamphlet than by everything he had written before—it was an explosion of hate.

Diderot and D'Alembert, however, in spite of their admiration for the Italians, did justice for a time to the French musicians. Grimm's attitude was sceptical; and in his pamphlet, *Le Petit Prophète de Boehmischbroda*, he declared that none of Rameau's operas could hold out against the victorious *Bouffons*, though he did not seem as cheered by the fact as one might expect. "What have we gained?" he asked; "the result will be that we shall have neither French opera nor Italian opera; or if we have the latter, we shall be the losers by the change, although Italian music is better than ours. For, do not be deceived, the Italian opera is as imperfect as the singers who adorn it—everything is sacrificed to please the ear."

Up till then admiration for French music had been an article of faith; and if the Encyclopædists came

[1] In his *Essai de la Liberté de la Musique.*

quickly to side with Rousseau and the Italian opera, it was because they were incensed by the uncivil stupidity of the partisans of French opera. "Certain people," said D'Alembert, "think *bouffoniste* and republican, critic and atheist, are the same." This was enough to revolt people of independent spirit; and it was absurd that no one in France should be allowed to attack opera without being covered with abuse and treated like a bad citizen. And what came as a last straw to the philosophers' anger was the cavalier way the Italians were got rid of by their enemies, by a warrant from the king in 1754, expelling them from France. This very despotic method of applying protectionism to art aroused the feeling of all people of independent mind against French opera. Hence the violence of the controversy.

. . . . . .

The first of the Encyclopædists' æsthetic principles was contained in Rousseau's cry: "Let us return to nature!"

"We must bring opera back to nature," said D'Alembert.[1] Grimm wrote, "The aim of all the fine arts is the imitation of nature." And Diderot wrote: "Lyric art can never be good if there is no intention to imitate nature."[2]

But was not this principle also Rousseau's? For in 1727 he wrote to Houdart de la Motte: "It is to be hoped that a musician may be found who

[1] *Fragments sur la Musique en général et sur la nôtre en particulier* (1773).

[2] *Troisième Entretien sur "Le Fils naturel"* (1757).

will study nature before trying to depict it." In his *Traité de l'Harmonie réduite à ses Principes naturels* (1722) he said: "A good musician should enter into the characters that he wishes to depict, and, like a good actor, put himself in the place of the person who is speaking."

It is true the Encyclopædists agreed with Rameau about the imitation of "nature," but they gave a different meaning to the word. By nature they meant *the natural.* They were the representatives of good sense and simplicity as opposed to the exaggerations of French opera by its singers, its instrumentalists, its librettists, and its composers.

When one reads the Encyclopædists' criticisms one is struck by the fact that it was especially to the execution of opera that they addressed themselves. Rousseau in a letter to Grimm in 1752 says: "Rameau has rather brightened up the orchestra and the opera, which is suffering from paralysis." But we are led to believe that Rameau went to excess in this direction, for about 1760 the critics were unanimous in their opinion that Opera had become a continuous clamour and deafening tumult. Rousseau wrote an amusing satire about it in his *Nouvelle Héloïse:*

> "The actresses are almost in convulsions, forcing loud cries from their lungs, with their hands clenched against their breasts, their heads thrown back, their countenances inflamed, their veins swollen, and their bodies heaving. It is difficult to know if the eye or the ear is the more

disagreeably affected. Their efforts cause as much suffering to those who look at them as their singing does to those who listen to them; and what is really inconceivable is that this shrieking is almost the only thing applauded by the audience. By the clapping of hands, one would take them for deaf people, who were so delighted now and again to catch a few piercing sounds that they wished the actors to redouble their efforts."

As for the orchestra, it was " an unending clatter of instruments, which no one could put up with for half an hour without getting a violent headache." This tumult was led by a conductor, whom Rousseau calls " the woodcutter," because he expended as much energy on marking time from his desk, by strokes of his bâton, as he would use for cutting down a tree.

I cannot help remembering these impressions when I read certain appreciations by M. Claude Debussy (which have since had great success), where he makes a contrast between Gluck's pompous, heavy style and Rameau's delicate simplicity —" that work of tender, charming delicacy with its fitting accents, without exaggeration or fuss . . . that clearness, that precision, that compactness of form." I do not know if M. Debussy is right; but if he is, Rameau's work as he feels it, and as it is felt to-day, bears no relationship to that which was heard in the eighteenth century. Whatever sort of a caricature Rousseau made, it only enlarged the salient points of Rameau's opera; and in his time

neither his friends nor his enemies characterized his work by delicacy, or restraint of feeling, or any mezzo-tint effects; it was known rather for its grandeur, whether true or false, sincere or exaggerated. It was understood, Diderot says, that for his finest airs, such as *Pâles flambeaux*, or *Dieu du Tartare*, healthy lungs, a full voice, and a wide compass were necessary. Also I am convinced that those people who admire him most to-day would have been the first to demand, with the Encyclopædists, a reform in the orchestra, the choruses, the singing, the acting, and the musical and dramatic execution.

But all this was as nothing to another reform that was badly needed—the reform of the libretto. Would those who praise Rameau's operas now have the courage to read the poems he strove to set to music? Are they well acquainted with Zoroaster, "the schoolmaster of the magi," warbling in vocalizations and triplets:

> "Aimez-vous, aimez-vous sans cesse. L'amour va lancer tous ses traits, l'amour va lancer, va lancer, l'amour va lancer, va lancer, l'amour va lancer, va lancer tous ses traits"?

What would be said of the romantic adventures of Dardanus and the mythological tragedies that were opportunely brightened by rigaudons, passepieds, tambourines, and bagpipes, all of which was in many respects quite charming, but justified Grimm's words:

> "French opera is a spectacle where the whole

happiness and misery of people consists in seeing dancing about them."

Or this passage from Rousseau :

"The manner of conducting the ballets is quite simple. If a prince is happy, all share his joy, and dance. If he is unhappy, those round him try to cheer him, and they dance. There are also many other occasions for dancing, and the most serious actions of life are accompanied by it. Priests dance, soldiers dance, gods dance, devils dance ; there is dancing even at burials—in fact, dancing is seasonable with everything."

How can such absurdities be taken seriously ? And all this is to be added to the style of that galaxy of insipid poets such as the abbé Pellegrin, Autreau, Ballot de Sauvot, Le Clerc de La Bruère, Cahusac, De Mondorge, and, greatest of all, Gentil-Bernard !

"The characters in the opera never say what they ought to. The actors generally speak in maxims and proverbs, and sing madrigal after madrigal. When each has sung two or three couplets, the scene is ended, and the dancing begins anew—if it did not we should die of boredom."[1]

How could great writers and people of taste like the Encyclopædists help revolting against the pompous stupidity of such poets ? Indeed, the poems

[1] Grimm, *Correspondance littéraire* (September 1757).

were so bad that quite recently, at the revival of *Hippolyte et Aricie*, they depressed the Grand Opera public—and heaven knows it is not a difficult public to please in the matter of poetry! What sighs of relief must have been heard at the performances of the little Italian works, whose *libretti* were as natural as their music.[1]

In *Le Neveu de Rameau* Diderot says:

> "What! They thought to accustom us to the imitation of the accents of passion, and that we should preserve our taste for flights, lances, glories, triumphs, and victories! See what they are driving at, Jean! Do they imagine that after mingling our tears with those of a mother who mourns the death of her son, we shall be pleased with their fairylands, with their insipid mythology and their mawkish madrigals, which evidence the poet's bad taste as much as the poverty of the art to which they lend themselves? My reply is, Fiddlesticks!"

[1] The *libretti* of French operas in the eighteenth century may be awarded the palm for tediousness. There have been more absurd ones, but none have been more insipid or boring. To read Metastasio's *libretti* after them is like a refreshment. I have lately been running through those that Händel set to music; and I was struck by their beauty, and even by their naturalness, compared with French *libretti* of the same period. Apart from the beauty of language, there was in them a force of imagination, not only romantic, but truly dramatic, which justified the admiration of contemporaries. Rameau never had at his disposal poems of a power like those that Händel used. I am not referring to Händel's oratorio subjects, which are often excellent, but to some of his Italian operas, such as Metastasio's *Ezio* and *Siroe*, or Haym's *Tamerlano*. There the characters and their emotions are true to life.

People may say that these critics have nothing to do with music. But a musician is responsible for the *libretto* he accepts; and a reform in opera was not possible until a poetic and dramatic reform had been made as well. To achieve that, a musician was needed who understood poetry as well as music. Rameau did not understand poetry; so his efforts to "imitate nature" were in vain. How was it possible to set good music to bad poetry? People may quote Mozart's wonderful opera, *The Magic Flute*, which was written round a stupid *libretto*. But in such a case the only thing to do is to follow Mozart's example—to forget the *libretto* and abandon oneself to musical fancy. Musicians like Rameau set about their work in another way, and pretended to pay great attention to the text. And what did they arrive at? The more they tried to follow the text, the more like it did their music become; and because the text was artificial, the music became also artificial. And so we find Rameau writing sometimes splendid music when the situation lent itself to tragic emotion, and sometimes dragged-out scenes, wearisome to a degree (even when the recitatives were clever), because the dialogues they expressed were deadly in their foolishness.

But if the Encyclopædists agreed with Rameau in thinking that the foundation of musical dramatic expression was nature, they disagreed with him as to the manner of applying this principle. In Rameau's genius there was an excess of knowledge and reason which shocked them. Rameau had French qualities and defects to an unusual extent;

for he was a profoundly intellectual artist, and had so marked a taste for theories and generalizations that it appeared in his closest studies of emotion; it was not human beings he studied, but their passions *in abstracto*. He went to work after the classic methods of the seventeenth century.[1] His love of method led him to make catalogues of chords and expressive modes, which resembled the catalogues of facial expression drawn up by Lebrun in the reign of Louis XIV. He would say, for example:

"The major mode, taken in the octave of the notes C, D, or A, is suited to lively and joyful

[1] M. Charles Lalo has shown in a recent thesis, *Esquisse d'une Esthétique Musicale scientifique* (1908), that Rameau is a distinct Cartesian; and that in his *Démonstration du principe de l'Harmonie* (1750), "he presents a strange medley of celebrated passages from the *Discourse* where Descartes recounts the genesis of his methods. The first pages of the *Démonstration* discuss methods of training the ear in music." Rameau himself says: "Enlightened by Descartes' methods, which by happy chance I had read and which had greatly struck me, I went back to the beginnings of music within me, and tried to imagine that I was a child trying to sing. . . . I put myself so far as possible in the position of a man who has neither sung nor heard any singing, promising myself some new experiences every time I felt I was getting away from my ordinary state and being led, in spite of myself, into realms of imagination. . . . The first sound that struck my ear was like a shaft of light . . .," etc.

"Everything is there," as M. Charles Lalo says; "the methodical and even hyperbolical doubts, the revelation of a *cogito*, which is here an *audio*. . . ."

And Rameau, with the terribly abstract spirit of Cartesian generalization, dreamed of applying what he thought was a newly discovered principle in music—the principle of harmony—to all fine arts and all sciences subject to calculation—in fact, to all nature. (See *Nouvelles Réflexions de M. Rameau*, 1752; and *Observations sur notre instinct pour la musique*, 1754.)

airs ; in the octave of the notes F or B flat, it is suited to tempests and anger, and subjects of that kind. In the octave of the notes G or E, it is suited to songs of a gentle or gay nature ; also in the octave of D, A, or E, what is great and magnificent may find expression. The minor mode, taken in the octave of D, G, B, or E, is suited to tenderness and love ; in the octave of C or F to tenderness and sadness ; in the octave of F or B flat to mournful songs. The other tones are not of great use."[1]

These remarks show a clear analysis of sounds and emotions ; but they also show how abstract and generalizing was the mind in which these observations originated. Nature, which he wished to subjugate and simplify, frequently refutes his arguments. It is only too evident that the first part of the *Pastoral Symphony*, which is in F major, shows us neither tempests nor anger of any description ; and that Beethoven's first part of the Symphony in C minor is scarcely characterized by tenderness and sadness. But it is not these small errors that matter. What is serious is the tendency of Rameau's mind to substitute abstract and fixed formulas (intelligent though they are) for the direct observation of living nature and the ceaseless changes by which she is renewed—as though nature could be classified according to fixed canons. He is so obsessed by his principles that they colour all his ideas and are forced upon his style. He thinks too

[1] *Traité de l'Harmonie réduite à ses Principes naturels* (1722).

much of the soul and art, of music in itself and the instrument he is handling, and of exterior form. He is often wanting in naturalness, even though he attains his ends. His justifiable pride in his clever discoveries in the theory of music leads him to set too much store upon science, and to underrate the value of " natural sensibility," as it was then called. The Encyclopædists were not likely to let pass assertions such as : " Melody arises from harmony, and plays only a subordinate part in music, giving but an empty and fleeting pleasure to the ear ; and while a fine harmonic progression is directly related to the soul, melody does not get beyond the ear passages."[1]

One understands well enough what the word " soul " meant to Rameau ; it was equivalent to " understanding." One is bound to admire the lofty and very French intellectualism of this great century ; but one must also remember that the Encyclopædists, without being musicians by profession, had deep musical feeling and a strong belief in the value of popular songs, in spontaneous melodies, in those " natural accents of the voice that reach the soul " ; and that they would be prejudiced against such doctrines as Rameau's, and would severely judge anyone who attached excessive importance to what they considered were merely complicated harmonies, and " laboured, obscure, and exaggerated accompaniments," as Rousseau called them. Rameau's richness of harmony is

[1] See Rousseau's reply to Rameau, and his *Examen de deux Principes avancés par M. Rameau* (1755).

exactly what attracts musicians to-day. But apart from the fact that musicians are not the only judges of music (for music should appeal to all kinds of people), we must not forget the condition of the opera of that time, with its clumsy orchestra, which was incapable of reproducing any shades of feeling, and which forced the singers to shout out the most sober passages and so spoil their whole character. When, therefore, Diderot and D'Alembert were so insistent about the necessity of soft accompaniments (" for music," they said, " is a discourse one would like to hear "), they were in revolt against the uniformly noisy executions of that time—a time when the meaning of *crescendo* and *decrescendo* were practically unknown.

The Encyclopædists thus demanded a triple reform :

The reform of the acting, the singing, and the instrumental execution.
The reform of the opera *libretti*.
The reform of the musical drama itself.

Rameau did little towards this last reform, although he greatly increased the expressiveness of music. He was able to translate certain tragic feelings with truth and nobility ; but he paid no heed to what is really the essence of drama—the concord of its dramatic progression. As a composition for the theatre, not one of his operas is as good as Lully's *Armide*.[1] His adversaries always attacked

[1] I almost think that Lully exercised more influence on Gluck than Rameau. Gluck himself says that the study of

these weak points ; and they were right. The musician who was to reform the drama was yet to come.

The Encyclopædists awaited this musician and prophesied his advent ; for they believed the reform of French opera was near at hand. They found a prelude to it in the creation of opéra-comique, to which they themselves contributed. Rousseau had set an example in 1753 with his *Devin du Village*. Some years afterwards Duni produced *Le Peintre amoureux de son Modèle* (1757), Philidor *Blaise le Savetier* (1759), Monsigny *Les Aveux indiscrets* (1759), and, lastly, Grétry *Le Huron* (1768). Grétry was a man after the Encyclopædists' own heart, and was the friend and disciple of them all—" the French Pergolesi " Grimm called him. He was a type of musician very different from Rameau, and his art was rather a poor and dried-up affair, though it possessed clarity and mental insight, combined with irony and delicate feeling, and a declamation moulded on natural speech. The foundation of French opéra-comique was the first result of

Lully's scores was full of suggestive ideas for him ; and that in them he perceived the foundations of a music both dramatic and moving, and a true genius for opera which only needed developing and perfecting. He hoped that through Lully's methods and French singing to evolve a right form of lyric tragedy. (See comte d'Escherny, *Mélanges de littérature et d'histoire*, Paris, 1811.) Gluck openly invited comparison with Lully by writing *Armide ;* and he wished to put his powers further to the test by writing a *Roland*.

But Gluck's true models were found in Italy and Germany ; in Händel, Graun, and Traetta, and the masters of the great dramatic *Lied*, of the Ode, or of the epic narrative—that is Johann Philipp Sack, Herbing, and many others, whom I hope later on to write about.

the Encyclopædists' musical polemics. But they achieved more than that, for they also helped to bring about the revolution which stirred up opera a little later on.

The Encyclopædists certainly never wished to destroy French opera by their arguments; though that may have been the idea of the German Grimm and the Swiss Rousseau. Diderot and D'Alembert, so French in ideas, thought only of preparing for the final victory of opera, by taking the initiative in "melodramatic" reform. D'Alembert declared that the French, "with their virile, bold, and productive natures," could always write good music; and that if French opera would only make the necessary reforms, it might be the best in Europe.[1] He was convinced of the imminence of a musical revolution, and the growth of a new art. In 1777, in his *Réflexions sur la Théorie de la Musique*, he wrote:

> "No nation is better fitted at this moment than ours to discover and appreciate new effects in harmony. We are about to cast aside our old music and take up something new. Our ears are only waiting to receive new impressions; they are greedy for them; and ideas are already fermenting in men's heads. Then why should we not hope from all these things for new pleasures and new truths?"

These lines were contemporary with Gluck's arrival in Paris; but long before that, more than

[1] *De la Liberté de la Musique* (1760).

twenty years before (i.e. in 1757), and five years before Gluck began his reform by the production of *Orfeo* in Vienna in 1762, Diderot wrote some prophetic pages in his *Troisième Entretien sur le Fils naturel,* and called upon the reformer of opera to show himself :

> " Let him come forward, the man of genius who is going to put true tragedy and true comedy upon the lyric stage ! "

This reform was not needed in music only, but on the stage as well :

> " Neither the poets, nor the musicians, nor the decorators, nor the dancers, have any sound ideas about their theatre."

The help of poetry, music, and dancing was needed in the reform of dramatic action. A great artist was needed, a great poet who should also be a musician, to realize the unity of a work of art which was the product of so many different arts.

Diderot showed by examples how a fine dramatic text might be translated by a musician : " I mean a man who has genius in his art ; not a man who only knows how to thread modulations together and make combinations of notes." And his examples were taken from *Iphigénie en Aulide,* which was the very subject of Gluck's first French opera some years later :

> " Clytemnestra's daughter has just been snatched from her for sacrifice. She sees the

sacrificial knife lifted above her daughter's bosom, the blood streaming, and the priest consulting the gods in her beating heart. Distracted by these visions she cries :

". . . O mère infortunée !
De festons odieux ma fille couronnée
Tend la gorge aux couteaux par son père apprêtés !
Calchas va dans son sang. . . . Barbares ! arrêtez !
C'est le pur sang du dieu qui lance le tonnerre . . .
J'entends gronder la foudre et sens trembler la terre.
Un dieu vengeur, un dieu fait retentir ces coups." [1]

" I do not know more lyrical verses than these in either Quinault or any other poet, nor of a situation that would lend itself better to musical expression. Clytemnestra's emotion would tear a cry from nature's very soul ; and a musician could convey it to my ears in all the accents of its horror. If he wrote this piece in a simple style he would fill himself with Clytemnestra's anguish and despair ; and he would only begin to write when he felt himself urged to do so by the terrible visions which possessed Clytemnestra. What a fine subject for a recitative the first verses make ! How the different phrases might be broken by some plaintive *ritornello !* What character one could put into such a sym-

[1] . . . O unhappy mother !
My daughter crowned with hateful wreaths
Offers her throat to a knife prepared by her father !
Calchas is spattered with her blood. . . . Barbarians ! stop !
It is the clean blood of the god who hurls the thunderbolts . . .
I hear the muttering of his anger and feel the earth tremble.
The voice of an avenging god is in the thunder.

phony! I seem to hear it all—the lament, the anguish, the dismay, the horror, the frenzy. The air would begin at 'Barbares, arretêz!' And 'Barbares' and 'Arretêz' might be declaimed in any manner he pleased; and he would be but a poor musician if the words did not prove an endless inspiration of melody.[1] Let us leave these verses to Mlle Dumesnil; for it is her declamation that the musician should have in mind when he is composing. . . .

"Here is another piece in which the musician might show his talents, if he had any—a piece where there is no mention of lances, or victory, or thunder, or robbery, or glory, or any other expressions that are the torment of the poet, though they may be the poor musician's sole inspiration.

Recitative:
Un prêtre, environné d'une foule cruelle . . .
Portera sur ma fille . . . (sur ma fille!) *une main criminelle. . . .*

Air:
Non, je ne l'aurai point amenée au supplice,
Ou vous ferez aux Grecs un double sacrifice! . . . etc."

Can one not already hear what Gluck would make of it?

But Diderot was not the only one to draw the future reformer's attention to the subject of *Iphigénie en Aulide.* The same year, in May 1757, the *Mercure de France* published count Algarotti's

[1] "*Musices seminarium accentus.* Accent is the nursery of melody," says Diderot, in *Le Neveu de Rameau.*

Essai sur l'Opéra,[1] in which this great artist, who was acquainted with Voltaire and the Encyclopædists, had included the poem of *Iphigénie en Aulide* to illustrate the principles in his treatise,[2] which, as M. Charles Malherbe has remarked,[3] are identical with those expounded by Gluck in his preface to *Alceste*.

It is more than likely that Gluck knew Algarotti's book. It is also possible that he knew the passage that I have just quoted from Diderot. The Encyclopædists' writings were spread over all Europe, and Gluck was interested in them. At any rate, he used to read the writings of the æsthete, J. von Sonnenfels, who reproduced their ideas ; and he was nourished on the Encyclopædist spirit, and was the poet-musician of their anticipations. All the principles that they set forth he applied ; all the reforms that they demanded he carried out. He realized the unity of musical drama founded on the observation of nature, the recitative modelled on the inflections of tragic utterance, the melody that speaks straight to the heart, the dramatic ballet, the reform of the orchestra and the acting. He was the instrument of the dramatic revolution which these philosophers had been preparing for twenty years.

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[1] Published in 1755 under the title of *Saggio sopra l'Opera in Musica*.

[2] He also published a second treatise on *Énée à Troie*—a subject used by Berlioz.

[3] *Un Précurseur de Gluck* (*Revue Musicale*, September and October 1902).

II

Gluck's appearance is known to us through the fine portraits of the period: through Houdon's bust, Duplessis' painting, and several written descriptions—notes made by Burney in 1772 in Vienna, by Christian von Mannlich in 1773 in Paris, by Reichardt in 1782 and 1783 in Vienna.

He was tall, broad-shouldered, very strong, moderately stout, and of compact and muscular frame. His head was round; and he had a large red face strongly pitted with the marks of small-pox. His hair was brown, and powdered. His eyes were grey, small and deep-set, but very bright; and his expression was intelligent, but hard. He had raised eyebrows, a large nose, full cheeks and chin, and a thick neck. Some of his features rather recall those of Beethoven and Händel. He had very little singing voice, and what there was sounded hoarse, though very expressive. He played the harpsichord in a rough and boisterous way, thumping it, but getting orchestral effects out of it.

In society he often wore a stiff and solemn air; but he was very quickly roused to anger. Burney, who saw both Händel and Gluck, compared their characters. "Gluck's temper," he said, "was as fierce as Händel's, and Händel's was a terror to everybody." Gluck lacked self-control, and was irritable, and could not get used to the customs of society. He was plain-spoken to the verge of coarseness, and, according to Christian von Mannlich,

on the occasion of his first visit to Paris he scandalized twenty times a day those who spoke to him. He was insensible to flattery, but was enthusiastic about his own works. That did not prevent him, however, from judging them fairly. He liked few people—his wife, his niece, and some friends; but he was undemonstrative and without any of the sentimentality of the period; he also held all exaggeration in horror, and never made much of his own people. He was a jolly fellow, nevertheless, especially after drinking—for he drank and ate heartily until apoplexy killed him. There was no idealism about him; and he had no illusions about either men or things. He loved money, and did not conceal the fact. He was also very selfish, "especially at table," von Mannlich says, "where he seemed to think he had a natural right to the best morsels."

On the whole he was a rough sort, and in no way a man of the world; for he was without sentiment, seeing life as it was, and born to fight and break down obstacles like a wild boar with blows of its snout. He had unusual intelligence in matters outside his art; and would have made a writer of no small ability if he had wished,[1] for his pen was full of sharp and acrid humour, and crushed the Parisian critics and pulverized La Harpe. Truly he had so much revolutionary and republican spirit in him that there was no one to equal him in that

[1] Burney said, "He is not only a friend of poetry, but a poet. He would have been a great poet if he had had another language at his service."

direction. No sooner had he arrived in Paris than he treated the court and society in a way no other artist had ever had the courage to do. On the first night of *Iphigénie en Aulide*, and at the last moment, after the king, the queen, and all the court had been invited, he declared that the performance could not be given because the singers were not ready; and in spite of accepted custom and people's remarks, the piece was put off until another time. He had a quarrel with prince Hénin, because he did not greet him properly when he met him at a party; and all Gluck said was, "The custom in Germany is only to rise for people one respects." And—sign of the times—nothing would induce him to apologize; more than that, prince Hénin had to go to Gluck when he wished to see him.

Gluck allowed the courtiers to pay him attentions. At rehearsals he appeared in a nightcap and without his wig, and would get the noble lords present to help him in his toilet, so that it became an honour to be able to hand him his coat or his wig. He held the duchess of Kingston in esteem because she once said that "genius generally signified a sturdy spirit and a love of liberty."

In all these traits one sees the Encyclopædists' man—the mistrustful artist jealous for his freedom, the plebeian genius, and Rousseau's revolutionary.

Where had this man got his vigorous moral independence? What was his origin?

He came from the people—from misery, from a long and desperate struggle against poverty. He

was the son of a gamekeeper of Franconia.[1] Born among trees, he spent his youth wandering about prince Kinsky's great forests, with naked feet, even in winter. Nature filled his being; and all his work shows it.[2] His early life was full of hardships, and he gained a livelihood with difficulty. When he was twenty years old he went to study at Prague, and sang in the villages through which he travelled, in order to pay his way, or he would play his violin for the peasants to dance to. In spite of assistance from several wealthy people, his manner of life was precarious and troubled until he married a rich woman in 1750, when he was thirty-five years old. Before that time he wandered about Europe without any settled post or occupation. Then at thirty-five, after he had written fourteen operas, he went to Denmark to give concerts, as a virtuoso on the harmonica.[3]

[1] His father signed himself Klukh. The name Gluck is often spelt Kluck or Cluch in his Italian works, such as the *Ippolito* of 1745.

[2] Victor Hugo's metaphor was curiously apposite: "Gluck is a forest and Mozart is a spring." Hugo would probably have been surprised at his own apt description.

[3] He did the same thing in London in 1746. A paragraph in the *Daily Advertiser* of March 31, 1746 (pointed out by M. A. Wotquenne), tells us that in Mr. Hickford's concert-hall in Brewer Street, on Tuesday, April 14, Mr. Gluck, a composer of operas, gave a concert with the best singers from the Opera. The performance was a special one, and included a concerto for twenty-six drinking-glasses, tuned by spring water, and accompanied by the orchestra. The new instrument was advertised as his own invention, on which anything might be played which could be performed on a violin or harpsichord; and in this way it was hoped to please both musical amateurs and curious people. The concert was doubtless a great success; for it was given again in the Haymarket on April 19. A similar concert was announced three years later, to be given in the château of Charlottenburg in Denmark on April 19, 1749.

Gluck owes two qualities to his privations and vagabond life: first, the great force of his rudely tempered will; and, second, thanks to his journeys from London to Naples and from Dresden to Paris, that knowledge of the thought and art of all Europe, which gave him his broad encyclopædic spirit.

That is our man. That is the formidable battering-ram which was brought to bear on the routine of French opera in the eighteenth century. How far he fulfilled the hopes of the Encyclopædists may be judged by a threefold circumstance. The leanings of the Encyclopædists in music were towards Italian opera, whose charm had seduced France from Rameau; to melody and romance, which were so dear to Rousseau; and to French *opéra-comique*, which they had helped to found. Now when Gluck started his revolution in Paris, it was in this triple school of Italian opera, of the romance (or *Lied*), and of French *opéra-comique*, he had been educated; out of this school he came—a school opposed in every way to Rameau's art.

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It is not enough to say that Gluck was acclimatized to Italian musical art, or that he was himself Italianized. During the first half of his life he was an Italian musician; and the musical side of his nature was quite Italian. At the age of twenty-two he was *Kammermusicus* to prince Melzi of Lombardy, and he followed him to Milan, where for four years he studied under the direction of G. B. Sammartini, one of the creators of the orchestral

symphony. His first opera, *Artaserse*, on a poem by Metastasio, was played in Milan in 1741. That was rapidly followed by a series of thirty-five dramatic cantatas, ballets, and Italian operas[1]—Italian in every sense of the word, with their airs *da capo*, their vocalizations, and all the concessions that the Italian composers of that time had to make to their *virtuosi*. In *Le Nozze d'Ercole e d'Ebe*, which was composed for a special occasion and played in Dresden in 1747, the part of Hercules was written for a soprano and played by a woman. Nothing could have been more Italian or more absurd.

One cannot say that this Italianism was an error of Gluck's youth which he afterwards renounced. Some of the finest airs in his French operas were taken from airs written in that Italian period, which he used again just as they were. M. Alfred Wotquenne has published a thematic catalogue of Gluck's works,[2] where one can exactly trace these borrowings. From his fifth opera, *Sofonisba* (1744), we see the beginning of the famous duet between Armida and Hidraot. From *Ezio* (1750) springs Orpheus's delicious air in the Elysian fields. The admirable song, *O malheureuse Iphigénie!* from *Iphigénie en Tauride*, is an air from *La Clemenza di Tito* (1752). An air from *La Danza* (1755) reappeared note for note, with other words, in Gluck's last opera, *Écho et Narcisse*. The ballet of the

[1] Gluck is known to have composed fifty dramatic works, a *De Profundis*, a collection of *Lieder*, six sonatas for two violins and bass, nine overtures for different instruments, and some independent airs.

[2] Breitkopf, Leipzig, 1904.

Furies, in the second act of *Orphée*, had already figured in the fine ballet in *Don Juan* (1761). *Telemacco* (1765), which is the finest of these Italian operas, furnished Agamemnon's splendid air at the beginning of *Iphigénie en Aulide*, and a quantity of airs for *Pâris et Hélène*, *Armide*, and *Iphigénie en Tauride*. And lastly, the celebrated scene of Hate in *Armide*, is entirely built up of fragments from eight different Italian operas! So it is evident that Gluck's personality was quite formed in his Italian works, and that no distinct break exists between his Italian and his French period. One is a natural growth from the other; there is no denying the fact.

It must not be thought that the revolution of the lyric drama, which made his name immortal, dates from his arrival in Paris. He had been preparing it since 1750, since that happy time when a new journey to Italy, and perhaps his love for Marianne Pergin, whom he married that year, stimulated him to a fresh outpouring of music. It was then he conceived the project of trying new dramatic reforms in Italian opera, by endeavouring to connect and develop its action and bring unity into it, by making the recitative dramatic, and by seeking inspiration in nature itself. It must be remembered that the *Orfeo ed Euridice* of 1762 and the *Alceste* of 1767 are Italian operas—"the new kind of Italian opera," as Gluck said;[1] and that the principal

[1] "I should lay myself open to very obvious reproach if I credited myself with the invention of the *new kind of Italian opera*, the success of which has justified its attempt. The chief

merit of the innovations in them belong, according to his own confession, to an Italian, Raniero da Calzabigi of Leghorn, the author of the *libretti*, who had a clearer idea of the dramatic reform needed than Gluck himself.[1] Even after *Orfeo* he returned to Italian opera in its old form in *Il Trionfo di Clelia* (1763), in *Telemacco* (1765), and in two cantatas with words by Metastasio. Just before his arrival in Paris, and a long time after *Alceste*, his compositions were Italian in style. And when he set about his reforms, they were not applied to French or German opera, but to Italian opera. The material he worked upon was purely Italian, and remained so until the end.

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Gluck began his reform of French opera through song, that is, through the *Lied*.

We have a collection of his *Lieder* written in 1770 to odes by Klopstock: *Klopstock's Oden und Lieder beym Clavier zu singen in Musik gesetzt von Herrn Ritter Gluck*. Gluck admired Klopstock. He made his acquaintance in Rastadt in 1775; and to him and his niece Marianne he sáng some of these *Lieder*, as well as some extracts from *Der Messias*,

merit of it belongs to Signor Calzabigi." (Letter from Gluck to the *Mercure de France*, February 1773.) In the preface to *Pâris et Hélène*, in 1770, after *Alceste*, Gluck speaks of "destroying the abuses which have crept into Italian opera and disgraced it."

[1] Calzabigi, in a very interesting letter written to the *Mercure* on June 25, 1784, claimed that Gluck owed everything to him; and he describes at length how he made him compose the music for *Orphée* after he had marked all the shades of expression on the manuscript, even the least important of them.

which he had set to music. This collection of songs is a slight one, and has not much value from an artistic point of view.[1] But historically it is important enough, for it gives us some of the earliest examples of *Lieder*, of the kind conceived by Mozart and Beethoven—that is, very simple melodies which are only meant to be an intensified expression of poetry.

It must be noticed that Gluck applied himself to this form of composition between *Alceste* and *Iphigénie en Aulide*, at the time when he was preparing to come to Paris. And if one runs through the score of *Orfeo* or *Iphigénie en Aulide*, one sees that some of the airs are true *Lieder*. Such is Orpheus's lament, *Objet de mon amour*,[2] repeated three times in the first act. Such also are a number of little airs in *Iphigénie en Aulide*: Clytemnestra's in the first act, *Que j'aime à voir ces hommages flatteurs*, which very closely resembles Beethoven's *Lied, An die entfernte Geliebte;* and nearly all Iphigenia's in the first act, such as *Les vœux dont ce peuple m'honore;* and in the third act, *Il faut de mon destin* and *Adieu, conservez dans votre âme.* These are either little musical sketches, such as Beethoven wrote, or romances written in Rousseau's spirit—spontaneous melodies which speak directly to the heart. The style of these works is, on the

[1] There are one or two worthy of consideration, especially *Die frühen Gräber*, which is restrained and impressive in its poetical feeling. But its value is, so to speak, more moral than musical.

[2] Numbers 7, 9, and 11 in the French edition; and 5, 7, and 9 in the Italian edition (Peters).

whole, nearer to *opéra-comique* than to French opera.

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There is nothing surprising in this when we remember that Gluck had for some time been trying his hand at French *opéra-comique*. From 1758 to 1764 he had written about a dozen French *opéra-comiques* to French words. It was no easy task for a German; for they needed grace, lightness, animation, and flowing melodic style. It was excellent exercise for Gluck; and in about ten years he learnt to enter into the spirit of our language and to get a good idea of our lyrical resources. He showed extraordinary skill in this kind of work. Among his *opéra-comiques* are *Ile de Merlin* (1758), *La Fausse Esclave* (1758), *L'Arbre enchanté* (1759), *Cythère assiégée* (1759), *L'Ivrogne corrigé* (1760), *Le Cadi dupé* (1761), *La Rencontre imprévue, ou les Pèlerins de la Mecque* (1764);[1] the most celebrated of them was *La Rencontre imprévue*, which was, according to Lesage, written to a *libretto* by Dancourt.[2] It was easy work, perhaps almost too easy;

[1] It is curious that some of the most celebrated parts of *Armide* and *Iphigénie en Tauride* have been borrowed from these *opéra-comiques*. The overture of *Iphigénie en Tauride* is nothing but the overture of *Ile de Merlin;* several pieces from the scene of Hate in *Armide* are taken more or less directly from the *Ivrogne corrigé*, and the overture of the latter becomes the Bacchanal of the former. M. Wotquenne even wishes to show that the air, *Sors du sein d'Armide!* has its origin in the duet, *Ah! si j'empoigne ce maître ivrogne;* but I think the resemblance is accidental.

[2] M. Weckerlin has republished it. The work was performed in 1904, at the École des Hautes Études Sociales. M. Tiersot has recently given fragments from Gluck's principal *opéra-comiques;* and in comparing these with some of Monsigny's work on the same subjects, he shows us Gluck's superiority.

but it suited this agreeable and unpretentious kind of production. Among these rather trivial compositions there are, however, some charming pieces, which foreshadow Mozart in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. Indeed, Mozart must have been inspired by them,[1] for in *Les Pèlerins de la Mecque* one finds his jolly laugh, his healthy merriment, and even his smiling sympathy. Better still, there are pages of tranquil poetry (like the air *Un ruisselet*) which bring to mind a dream of spring; and others, with greater breadth of style (like Ali's air in the second act, *Tout ce que j'aime est au tombeau*), where an echo of Orpheus's laments may be found. But everywhere is clearness, appropriateness, restraint, and other quite French qualities.

In all this Gluck must have pleased the Encyclopædists; for they were the patrons of *opéra-comique*, of simple song, of unpedantic music, and of a popular musical drama understood by all. Gluck knew this so well, that before he visited Paris he began to base many of his ideas of reform on Rousseau's theories; and as soon as he arrived in Paris he communicated with Rousseau, and devoted himself to pleasing him, and was indifferent to the opinions of the public.

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The principles of Gluck's reform are well known. He set them out, in 1769, in his celebrated preface to *Alceste*, and also in his less well-known, but equally interesting, dedicatory letter to *Pâris et*

[1] Mozart composed variations for the piano on one of the airs of *Pèlerins de la Mecque*, a few months after its first production.

Hélène, in 1770. I shall not dwell upon these principles, which have been so often quoted; I only wish to remark on certain aspects of them, in order to show how Gluck's opera responded to the hopes of the thinkers of his time.

In the first place, Gluck claimed, not to have created a new kind of music, but a new kind of musical drama; and he gives the chief honour of this creation to Calzabigi, who "conceived lyric drama upon a new plan, where florid descriptions, useless comparisons, cold and sententious moralizings were replaced by interesting situations, strong emotions, simple expressive language, and a performance full of variety." His reform was concerned with drama and not with music.

To this end he directed all his efforts:

> "The voices, the instruments, and all sounds, even silence itself, should have one aim in view, and that is expressiveness; and the union between the words and the music should be so close that the music should belong quite as much to the poem as the poem to the music."[1]

The result of this was that Gluck sought new methods (but he does not say new music):

> "When I was engaged upon a scene, I tried to find a broad and strong expression for it; *and I especially wished that every part of it should be related.*"[2]

[1] Letter from Gluck to La Harpe (*Journal de Paris*, October 12, 1777).

[2] Letter from Gluck to Suard (*ibid.*).

This constant care for the unity and coherence of the whole work, which was lacking in Rameau, was so strong in Gluck that, curiously enough, he had no great faith in the expressive power of either melody or harmony.

To Corancez he said :

> " Composers have looked in vain for the expression of certain emotions in the combination of notes that make up a song. Such a thing is not possible. A composer has resources in harmony, but they are often insufficient for him."

To Gluck, it was the place of a piece of music that was of especial importance ; and by an air's contrast or connection with the airs that preceded or followed it, and by the choice of the instruments that accompanied it, he got his dramatic effects. From the compact plot of his chief works, from compositions like the first and second acts of *Alceste*, and the second act of *Orfeo* and *Iphigénie en Tauride*, in spite of a few patchy bits here and there, it would be difficult to take any of the airs out of their place, for the whole is like a firmly linked chain.

Gluck's progress in the theatrical world was steady. He limited his part as musician to " giving help to poetry, in order to strengthen the expression of feeling and the interest of the situations, without interrupting the action of the play or retarding it by superfluous ornaments." In a famous passage he says : " Music should give to poetry what the brightness of colour and the happy

combination of light and shade give to a well-executed and finely-composed drawing—it should fill its characters with life without destroying their outline." That is a fine example of disinterestedness in a composer who was anxious to put his gifts at the service of drama. This disinterestedness will doubtless seem extreme to musicians, but very admirable to dramatic authors. It was at all events quite opposed to the French opera of that time, as described by Rousseau, with its intricate music and unwieldy accompaniments.

People asked if this was not pauperizing art. But Gluck scouted the notion, and said that his methods would lead art back to beauty; for beauty consisted, not only of truth, as Rameau had said, but of simplicity:

> "Simplicity, truth, and naturalness are the great fundamentals of beauty in the production of all art."

Elsewhere he says: "I believed that the greater part of my work amounted to seeking out a noble simplicity." (Letter to the grand-duke of Tuscany, 1769.)

Like Diderot, Gluck took his chief model from Greek tragedy. "It will not do," said Gluck, "to judge my music by its performance on the harpsichord in a room." It was not *salon* music; it was music for wide spaces like the old Greek theatres:

> "The frail amateur whose soul lives in his ears, may perhaps find an air is too rough, or a passage

too strongly marked or badly prepared; and he does not see that such music, in its particular situation, may be nobly expressive."

Like painting in a fresco, one must see this art from a distance. If anyone criticized a passage in Gluck's music, he would ask:

"Did it displease you in the theatre? No? Well then, that is enough. When I have got my effect in the theatre, I have got all I wanted; and I assure you it matters very little if my music is not agreeable in a *salon* or a concert-hall. Your question is like that of a man who has placed himself on the gallery in the dome of the Invalides, and who shouts out to an artist down below: 'Hi! sir, what are you trying to paint down there? Is it a nose, or an arm? for it resembles neither one nor the other.' And the artist might shout back with good reason: 'Well, supposing you come down and have a look, and judge for yourself!'"[1]

Grétry, who thoroughly understood Gluck's art, said:

"Everything here should be on a big scale; for the picture is meant to be seen from a great distance. The musician works only in a broad way. There are no roulades. The song is nearly always syllabic. The harmony and the melody have to be well defined, and every detail

[1] A conversation with Corancez (*Journal de Paris*, August 21, 1788).

of a polished kind excluded from the orchestration. In a way, it is like painting with a broom. And if the words are only to express one meaning, and a piece of music is to show unity of sentiment, the musician has the right, and indeed is obliged, to use only one kind of metre or rhythm. Gluck was only really great when he had put *constraint* upon his orchestra and the singing, by confining it to one kind of expression."[1]

One knows well the force of these insistent and repeated rhythms, where Gluck's will and energy is so strongly marked. Bernhard Marx says[2] that no musician is his equal in this, not even Händel. Perhaps Beethoven alone approaches him. All Gluck's rules were made for an art of monumental size, an art which was intended to be viewed from a particular standpoint. "There was no rule," said Gluck, "which I did not believe it my duty to sacrifice if I could gain an effect."

Thus dramatic effect is, first and last, the main object of Gluck's music. And this principle was carried to such extremes that Gluck himself admits such music lost nearly all its meaning, not only when it was heard away from the theatre, but also when the composer was not there to conduct it. For if the least alteration was made in either the time or the expression, or if some detail was out of place, it was enough to spoil the effect of a scene ; and, as Gluck says, in such a case, an air like *J'ai perdu mon*

[1] *Essais sur la Musique*, Book II, Chap. IV.
[2] *Gluck und die Oper* (Berlin, 1863).

Eurydice might become *un air de marionettes* (an air for a marionette show).

In all this one sees the true dramatic spirit, for whom the drama, or the finest piece of music written, lives, not in books or at concerts, but on the stage and through the actors. In some cases—in the *Trionfo di Clelia*, of 1763, for example—we know that Gluck first composed his opera in his head, and would not write it down until after he had seen the actors, and studied their methods of singing. His work was then accomplished in a few weeks. Mozart also sometimes adopted this method. But Gluck carried this idea so far that at length he lost all interest in his scores, whether written or published. His manuscripts are terribly careless affairs, and he had almost to be bullied into correcting them for publication. I do not deny that all this shows rather a lack of balance; but there is something very interesting about it. It is certainly sure evidence of the violent reaction against the opera of that time, which was really dramatic music for the concert-room, or chamber-opera.

It goes without saying that with such ideas Gluck could scarcely help being led to that reform of the orchestra and operatic singing which people of taste were so earnestly desiring. After his arrival in Paris it was the first thing that claimed his attention. He attacked the unspeakable chorus, which sang in masks, without any gestures—the men being ranged on one side with their arms crossed, and the women on the other with fans in their hands. He attacked the still more unspeakable

orchestra, who played in gloves so as not to dirty their hands, or to keep them warm ; and who spent their time noisily tuning up, and in wandering about and talking, just as they pleased. But the most difficult people to deal with were the singers, who were vain and very unruly. Rousseau, in his amusing way, says :

> " The Opera is no longer what it used to be—a company of people paid to perform in public. It is true that they are still paid, and that they perform in public ; but they have become a Royal Academy of Music, a kind of royal court, and a law unto themselves, with no particular pride in either truth or equity."

Gluck mercilessly obliged his " academicians " to rehearse for six months at a time, excusing no faults, and threatening to fetch the queen, or to return to Vienna, every time there was any rebellion. It was an unheard-of thing for a composer to get obedience from operatic musicians. People came running to these bellicose rehearsals as if they were plays.

Dancing was still something outside the action of opera ; and in the anarchy that prevailed before Gluck's time it had been almost the pivot of opera, round which everything else had revolved as best it could. Gluck, however, trampled on the dancers' vanity, and stood his ground against Vestris, who had tyrannized over everyone else. He did not scruple to tell him that " he had no use for gambols ; and that an artist who carried all his learning in his heels had not the right to be kicking about an opera

like *Armide*." He curtailed the dancing, so far as possible, and only allowed it to form an integral part of the action, as may be seen in the ballet of the Furies, or that of the spirits of the blest in *Orfeo*. With Gluck the ballet, therefore, lost some of the delightful exuberance it had had in Rameau's operas; but what it lost in originality and richness it gained in simplicity and purity; and the dance airs in *Orfeo* are like classic bas-reliefs, the frieze of a Greek temple.

All through Gluck's opera we find this simplicity and clearness, the subordination of the details of a work to the unity of the whole, and an art that was great and popular and intelligible—the art dreamed of by the Encyclopædists.

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But Gluck's genius went beyond Encyclopædic dreams. He came to represent in music the free spirit of the eighteenth century—a spirit of musical nationalism set above all petty considerations of race rivalry. Before Gluck, the problems of art had resolved themselves into a battle between French and Italian art. It had been a question of Who will win? Pergolesi or Rameau? Then came Gluck. And what was his victory? French art? Italian art? German art?[1] No; it was something quite

[1] French people were quite bewildered when they first heard his music. In their usual way, they sought to classify it. Some said it was Italian music, and others that it was a Teutonic modification of French opera. Rousseau was the most intelligent; he took Gluck's part unreservedly at first; and then had the courage to say he was wrong, and to maintain that good music could not be written to French words. But that opinion was soon modified.

different—it was *international* art, as Gluck himself tells us :

> "By fine melodies and natural feeling, by a declamation which shall closely follow the prosody of each language and the character of its people, I am seeking to find a means of writing music which shall suit all nations, and eliminate the ridiculous distinctions between music of different nations."[1]

May we not admire the loftiness of this ideal, which raised itself above ephemeral party conflicts, and was the logical result of the philosophic thought of the century—a conclusion which the philosophers themselves had hardly dared to hope for ?[2] Yes ; Gluck's art is a European art. In that I feel he is finer than Rameau, who is exclusively French. When Gluck wrote for French people he did not pander to their caprices ; he only seized upon the general and essential traits of the French spirit and style. In this way he escaped most of the affectations of the time. He is a classic. Why should not Rameau, who was so great a musician, have a place in the history of art as high as Gluck's ? It is because he did not really know how to rise above fashion ; because one cannot find in him the strong

[1] Letter to the *Mercure de France*, February 1773.

[2] It is only just to remember, however, that Rousseau, in his *Dictionnaire de musique* (1767), says that after having been enthusiastic about French music, and then having felt the same about Italian music, he at length recognized but one kind of music which, in belonging to no particular country, belonged to all.

will and clear reason which characterized Gluck. Gluck has been likened to Corneille. There were great dramatic poets in France before Corneille's time, but none had his immortal style. " I compose music," said Gluck, " in such a way that it will not grow old for some time to come." Such an art, voluntarily denying itself (so far as possible) the pleasure of being in the fashion, is naturally less seductive than an art which follows the fashion, as Rameau's did. But this supreme liberty of spirit raises Gluck's music out of the country and the age from which it sprang, and makes it part of all countries and all ages.

Whether people liked it or not, Gluck made his influence felt in contemporary art. He put an end to the fight between Italian and French opera. Great as Rameau was, he was not strong enough to hold out against the Italians ; he was not universal enough, nor eternal enough—he was too French. One art does not triumph over another by opposing it ; it conquers by absorbing it and leaving it behind. Gluck conquered Italian opera by using it. He conquered the old form of French opera by broadening it. That impenitent lover of things Italian, Grimm, was obliged to bow before Gluck's genius ; and though he never liked him, he was obliged to admit, in 1783, that the lyric revolution during the last eight years had been marvellous, and that Gluck must be allowed the glory of having begun it.

" It is he, who with a heavy, knotted club has overthrown the old idol of French opera, and

driven out monotony, inaction, and all the tedious prolixity that possessed it. It is possibly to him we owe Piccinni's and Sacchini's masterpieces."

Nothing is more certain. Piccinni, whom lovers of Italian opera set up against Gluck, was only able to fight against him by taking profit from his example, and finding inspiration in his declamation and style. Gluck prepared a road for him, as he did for Grétry,[1] Méhul, and Gossec, and all the masters of French music; and one may even say that his breath faintly put life into a great part of the songs of the Revolution.[2] His influence was not less felt in Germany, where Mozart (whom he knew personally,[3] and whose early works, like *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and the "Parisian" Symphony, he admired) brought about the conquest of this reformed and europeanized Italian opera, though by means of quite another kind of musical greatness.

[1] A piece like Grétry's *La Caravane*, in 1785, was supported by Gluck's followers as belonging to their side.

[2] Gluck's religious scenes have especially been imitated. Certain fragments of his operas (among others, the chorus from *Armide*, "*Poursuivons jusqu'au trépas*") were often "revolutionized" and played at fêtes during the Revolution.

[3] When Mozart was seven years old he came to Vienna at the time of the production of *Orfeo*; and his father was present at the second production in October 1762. In Mozart's Letters we have an account of a concert given by Mozart in 1783. Gluck was present at it. "His box was next to the one where my wife was. He could not speak highly enough of my music, and he invited us to dine with him the following Sunday" (March 12, 1783).

The end of *Armide* certainly served as a model for the end of *Don Juan*. Gluck's influence is also very evident in *Idomeneo*.

Beethoven himself was profoundly impressed by Gluck's melodies.[1]

Thus Gluck had the very unique privilege of directly influencing the three great musical schools of Europe all together, and of leaving his imprint upon them. He was part of all of them, and not confined by the limitations of any one of them. And this was because he had taken into his service the artistic elements of all nations: the melody of the Italians, the declamation of the French, the *Lied* of Germany,[2] the simplicity of the Latin style, the naturalness of *opéra-comique* (that recently manufactured "*article de Paris*"), the fine gravity of German thought—especially Händel's thought. We must remember that Händel (who is said not to have liked Gluck at all) was Gluck's chosen master on account of the wonderful beauty of his melodies, his grandeur of style, and his rhythms like armies

[1] I mentioned just now the resemblance between certain little airs in *Iphigénie en Aulide* and some of Beethoven's *Lieder*. Compare also the prelude and the conclusion of the air *Che fiero momento* from the third act of *Orfeo* (*Fortune ennemie* in the French *Orphée*) with the first phrase of the first *Molto Allegro* of the *Sonata Pathétique*. Or notice the Beethoven-like phrase, "*La mort a pour moi trop d'appas*" from the air *Ah! divinités implacables!* in the third act of *Alceste*; or Iphigenia's song, *Adieu, conservez dans votre âme* (*Iphigénie en Aulide*, Act III), the conclusion of which is purely Beethoven in spirit.

It is even permissible to believe that Weber in the *Freischütz* had in mind Alcestis's air, *Grands Dieux, soutenez mon courage* (Act III) and the instrumental accompaniment which supports and illustrates the words "Le bruit lugubre et sourd de l'onde qui murmure."

[2] Burney adds the influence of English ballads, which he says Gluck must have studied during his visit to England, and which would first reveal the natural to him.

on the march.[1] By his education and life, which was divided among so many countries of Europe, Gluck was fitted for this great part of a European master—the first master, if I mistake not, who, by the domination of his genius, imposed a kind of musical unity on Europe. His artistic cosmopolitanism gathered together the efforts of three or four races and two centuries of opera in a handful of works which expressed the essence of the whole in a concentrated and, one may say, economical fashion.

Perhaps it was too economical. We have to recognize that if Gluck's melodic vein is exquisite, it is not very abundant, and that though he wrote some of the most perfect airs that have ever been composed, the number of them is very small. We

[1] Gluck was present at the first performance of *Judas Maccabeus* in London in 1746. He always had a great admiration for Händel, and his portrait was in Gluck's bedroom above the bed. It is surprising that more notice has not been taken of the inspiration Gluck found in Händel; and that is only to be explained by the almost total oblivion into which Händel's great work has lately fallen—excepting a few oratorios, which are quite inadequate as an expression of his dramatic genius. In his operas and cantatas one finds the double inspiration—the pastoral and heroic inspiration (at times the almost "demoniacal" inspiration) which characterizes Gluck. Models for music like that in *Sommeil de Renaud* and the Elysian scenes abound in Händel, as do also those for the dances of the Furies and the scenes in Tartary. One may almost believe that through Händel Gluck found inspiration in Cavalli, for the *Medea* is the prototype of all those figures and scenes in the infernal regions which seem to be cut by the hand of a lapidary.

We must note, moreover, that Gluck took up certain subjects that had been treated by Händel, such as *Alceste* and *Armide;* and he must have been acquainted with Händel's operas and cantatas.

I hope in the near future to deal more fully with the question of Gluck's connection with Händel.

must measure this master by the matchless quality of his works, and not by their quantity. He was poor in musical inventiveness, not only in polyphony and the development of concerted music, and the treatment of themes and constructional work, but in melody itself; since he was obliged very often to take airs out of his old operas to put into his new ones.[1] Gluck's Parisian admirers set up a bust of him in 1778, and on it was inscribed: *Musas præposuit sirenis.* Truly he did sacrifice the sirens to the muses; for he was a poet rather than a musician, and we may well regret that his musical gifts did not equal his poetic ones.

But if Mozart, with his extraordinary musical genius, and Piccinni with his greater melodic talent,

[1] One must be careful not lightly to accuse Gluck of copying himself in defiance of his dramatic theories. By examining his works closely we shall find:

1. The works which he thought most of, such as the Italian *Alceste* of 1767, have borrowed nothing from his earlier compositions.

2. In *Orfeo*, *Iphigénie en Aulide*, and the French *Alceste*, these borrowings are practically confined to dance airs.

There remains *Armide* and *Iphigénie en Tauride*, which were written towards the end of his life, and which are full of borrowings. Again we may remark that Gluck does not resort to his old works in an idle or aimless kind of way, except in *Iphigénie en Tauride*, the last of his great dramas, written at a time when the weariness of age was beginning to weigh upon him. In *Armide* it is most interesting to observe how he has recast a great deal of old material and changed it into something quite fresh and original. No more striking example of this can be found than in the scene of Hate, built out of fragments from *Artamene*, *Innocenza giustificata*, *Ippolito*, *Feste d'Apollo*, *Don Juan*, *Telemacco*, *L'Ivrogne corrigé*, and *Paride ed Elena*. M. Gevaert is justified when he says that Gluck looked upon his old works as "sketches and studio studies," which he had a perfect right to use, after transforming them, for more finished pictures.

surpassed him as musicians, and if Mozart even surpassed him as a poet, yet it is only just to do homage to him for a part of their genius, since they both applied his principles and followed his examples. In one way, at least, Gluck was the greatest, not only because he was a pioneer and showed them the way, but because he was the noblest of them.[1] He was the poet of all that is finest in life ; although he did not rise to those almost inaccessible and breathless heights of metaphysical dreams and faith in which Wagner's art delighted. Gluck's art was something profoundly human. If we compare his works with Rameau's mythological tragedies, his feet seem to be on earth ; for his heroes were men, and their joys and their sorrows were sufficient for him. He sang of the purest passions : of conjugal love in *Orfeo* and *Alceste*, of paternal and filial love in *Iphigénie en Aulide*, of fraternal love and friendship in *Iphigénie en Tauride*, of disinterested love, of sacrifice, and of the gift of oneself to those one loves. And he did it with admirable simplicity and sincerity. The inscription on his tomb runs as follows : " Hier ruht ein rechtschaffener deutscher Mann. Ein eifriger Christ. Ein treuer Gatte. . . ." (Here lies an honest German. An ardent Christian. A faithful husband.), and the mention of his musical

[1] Friedrich Strauss wrote a sonnet on the occasion of the erection of a monument to Gluck's memory at Munich in 1848, and in it he calls him with justice " the Lessing of opera, which was shortly, by the grace of the gods, to find its Goethe in Mozart. He was not the greatest, but he was the noblest " :

" Lessing der Oper, die durch Göttergunst
Bald auch in Mozart ihren Goethe fand :
Der grösste nicht, doch ehrenwert vor allen."

talent was left to the last line—which seems to show that his greatness was more in his soul than in his art. And that is as it should be; for one of the secrets of the irresistible fascination of that art was that from it came a breath of moral nobility, of loyalty, of honesty, and of virtue. It is this word "virtue" which seems to me to sum up the music of *Alceste*, or *Orfeo*, or the chaste *Iphigénie*. By "virtue" this composer endears himself to other men; in that he was, like Beethoven, something finer than a great musician—he was a great man with a clean heart.

GRÉTRY

No musician is better known to us. He has been described, down to the least detail, according to the fashion of the time—the indiscreet fashion of his friend, Jean-Jacques Rousseau. He has also described himself in his own charming *Mémoires, ou Essais sur la musique,* which were published in three volumes, in 1797,[1] by order of the Committee of Public Instruction, at the request of Méhul, Dalayrac, Cherubini, Lesueur, Gossec, and Lakanal. For Grétry at that time was Citizen Grétry, superintendent of the Conservatoire of Music; and his work claimed to aim at civic utility. Few books on music are so full of matter or so suggestive, and the reading is agreeable and easy—no small merit in a clever book. In prose, as in music, Grétry wrote for everyone, "even for fashionable people,"[2] he said. His style, perhaps, is not very finished, and it does not do to look too closely into it. He is fond of periphrasis. He calls his parents "the authors of my days"; a surgeon is "a follower of Æsculapius"; and women are "the sex who have received their share of sensibility." He is a sensitive man: "Let us ever seek delightful sensations," he says, "but let them be seemly and pure. Those are the only kind that make us happy; and no

[1] The first volume had already appeared, in 1789.
[2] The quotations that follow are taken from the *Mémoires.*

man of sensibility, loving compassion, is ever feared by his fellow-creatures."

Those sentiments, written in 1789, must have been approved by the sensitive Robespierre, who was fond of Grétry's music.

The book is written in a rather desultory way, in spite—or by reason of—its wealth of divisions, subdivisions, volumes, chapters, and so forth. Grétry mixes up metaphysical digressions with his narrative: he speaks of the unity of the world, of angels, of life, of death, and of eternity; he apostrophizes Love, Maternal Love, Modesty, Women—"O lovable sex! O source of all blessings! O sweet rest of life! O bewitching beings! . . ."

He also addresses Illusion, and thees and thous it for seven pages. Hereditary Rank is treated in the same way.

And, in spite of it all, he is charming, because everything is natural and spontaneous, and there is so much humour about him. "You a musician, and yet you have humour!" was what Voltaire said to him, in scornful surprise.

. . . . . .

Grétry's *Mémoires* are remarkable both for his recollections and his ideas—both of which are equally interesting. He gives us minute descriptions of things, and spares us nothing: we hear all about his physical constitution, his dreams, his indispositions, his diet, and some unexpected details about the more intimate parts of his toilet. The book forms one of the most precious documents we

have; for it tells us about an artist's temperament, and is the rare autobiography of a musician who not only knows how to write, but who is worth writing about.

The unpretending Grétry was the son of a poor violinist of Liège, where he was born February 11, 1741. He had German blood in him, for his paternal grandmother was German and one of his uncles was an Austrian prelate.

His first musical impressions came from a pot that was boiling on the fire. He was then four years old, and he danced to the saucepan's song. He wanted to know where the song came from; but his curiosity caused the pot to upset, and his eyes were so badly burned that his sight was permanently injured. His grandmother took him away to live with her in the country; and there, again, it was the noise of water, the soft murmuring of a spring, that impressed itself upon his memory: "I still hear and see the limpid spring by the side of my grandmother's house. . . ."

At six years old he fell in love: "it was but an indefinite emotion, which was extended to several people; yet I loved them very much, and was so shy, that I dared not say anything about it."

He had a fastidious but determined nature; and suffered cruelly from ill treatment by a master, though his pride would not let him complain. On the day of his first communion he asked God to let him die if he was not to become an upright man and distinguished in music. The first part of the prayer was nearly fulfilled, as the same day a rafter

fell on his head and wounded him severely. When he came to himself his first words were: "Then I shall be an upright man and a good musician after all."

At that time he was a mystic and superstitious. His devotion to the Virgin amounted almost to idolatry. He was rather troubled about explaining this to the members of the National Convention who edited his book; but he did not hide these facts—a proof of his absolute sincerity. He was susceptible and vain, and never forgot the injustices he had received. Long afterwards he thought of the humiliations he had suffered as a child at the hands of his first master.

A company of Italian singers decided his vocation. They came to Liège to play in Pergolesi's and Buranello's operas. Grétry, though still a boy, had free access to the theatre, and for a whole year he was present at all the performances, and often at the rehearsals as well. "It was there," he says, "that I developed a passionate love of music." He learned to sing, and was able to do it, "in the Italian style, with as much skill as the best singers in the Opera." All the Italian company came to hear him sing in church, where he had a great success. Each one of them looked upon him as his pupil. So, even in his childhood, this little Walloon's musical education was purely Italian.

When he was fifteen or sixteen years old he was seized with internal hæmorrhage; and it troubled him every time he composed anything. "I vomited," he says, "even six or eight cupfuls of blood at

periodic intervals—twice during the day and twice during the night." This hæmorrhage did not leave him until he was getting an old man. All his life he had a delicate chest, and had to submit to very severe dieting, his food being often nothing but a glass of water and a pound of dried figs. He was subject to fevers, and on several occasions had serious attacks of "tertian or typhus fever," accompanied by delirium. Besides this, he suffered from musical obsessions, which nearly drove him out of his senses; for he would have a chorus, like that of the janissaries in *Les Deux Avares*, continually going in his head for days and nights on end. He says, "My brain was like a pivot on which that piece of music everlastingly turned, and I could do nothing to stop it." He had frequent dreams, to which he liked to attach prophetic meanings: "When an artist who is occupied with a great subject goes to bed at night, his brain continues to work out things in spite of himself, whether he is asleep or only half asleep. . . . Then when he goes to his study he is astonished to find all his difficulties are solved. The night man has done all that; the day man is often nothing but a scribe."

I have mentioned these details just to show what was abnormal in Grétry, though he was otherwise one of the most balanced artists that ever lived; for indeed at times one is almost tempted to reproach him with an excess of common sense.

After Grétry's success as a little singer, his one idea was to go to Italy. He was, as a matter of fact, sent there in 1759, when he was eighteen years old. There was at that time a College of Liège in Rome, which had been founded by a rich man from Liège. Any native of that town who was not more than thirty years old could be educated there, as well as fed, lodged, and looked after generally. Grétry obtained admission to this College.

He describes at length his journey into Italy. It was a picturesque journey, though full of hardships; for he journeyed on foot, under the guide of a kind smuggler, who, on the pretext of escorting students from Liège to Rome, and back again, carried Flemish lace into Italy and relics into Flanders.

Grétry reached Rome one Sunday, on a warm spring morning "with a tinge of melancholy about it." The seven years he spent there were so full of delight, that later on he wished every artist to share his experience, and no one was more anxious than he to get French or German musicians sent to Rome.

At that time the most noted Italian musician was Piccinni. Grétry went to see him, but Piccinni paid little attention to him.

> "And in truth it was all I deserved. . . . But what pleasure the least encouragement on his part would have given me! I looked upon him with such a feeling of respect that he might have been flattered, but my shyness prevented

him from guessing what was stirring the depths of my heart. Piccinni returned to the work that he had left for a moment in order to receive us. I summoned up courage to ask him what he was composing, and he said, 'An oratorio.' We stayed an hour beside him; and then my friend made a sign to me, and we left him unperceived."

Directly he reached his own house, Grétry wanted to imitate Piccinni: to take a large sheet of paper, draw bars upon it, and write an oratorio. But his imitation ceased when he had drawn the bars.

At Bologna he made the acquaintance of Father Martini, who helped him to get into the Philharmonic Academy there, by writing the piece of music set for his entrance examination. This seemed to be a sort of hobby with the kind Father, for later on he rendered the same service to Mozart.

Grétry's real master, however, was the graceful Pergolesi, who had died thirty-five years ago. "Pergolesi's music," Grétry tells us, "affected me more keenly than any other music." In another place he says, "When Pergolesi was born, truth was made known." What he especially admired in Pergolesi was the naturalness of his declamation —a naturalness as "indestructible as nature"; and Grétry tried all his life to apply this quality in an intelligent way to French music. In his love for Pergolesi he managed, not only to resemble him musically, but physically as well:

"I learnt with great pleasure, during my stay in Rome, that several elderly musicians thought that my figure and face were like Pergolesi's. They told me that he suffered from a malady like my own whenever he was at work. Vernet, who had known and liked Pergolesi, told me the same thing in Paris."

Grétry's debut in dramatic music was made at Rome, where he had some *Intermedi* performed with success, these little pieces being like the *Serva padrona* in style. He left Rome in 1767, in spite of offers that were made to induce him to remain. Paris had attracted him ever since he had read the score of Monsigny's *opéra-comique*, *Rose et Colas*. He saw this piece played when he was in Geneva, where he stayed for six months. It was the first time that he had seen a French *opéra-comique*, and his pleasure was not unmixed. It took him a little time to get used to hearing French sung, for at first he thought it disagreeable.

While in Geneva he did not omit to go and pay his respects at Ferney, where Voltaire welcomed this chosen one among musicians, who was nothing of a fool, even outside his art.

Then he came to Paris.

"I entered the town with a strange emotion I could not account for; but it was somehow connected with the resolution I had made not to leave the place before I had conquered every difficulty that could stand in the way of my making a name."

The struggle was short and sharp; for it lasted two years. Both theatrical managers and actors urged Grétry to take Monsigny's romances as his model. However, in his rivals he had nothing to complain of. Philidor and Duni showed him great kindness; and he had the good luck to have friends and councillors in people like Diderot, Suard, the abbé Arnaud, and the painter Vernet, all of whom were musical enthusiasts. Grétry says:

> "It was the first time that I had heard anyone speak about my art with true understanding. Diderot and the abbé Arnaud used their utmost powers of eloquence on every festal occasion, and by their vehemence filled people with a splendid eagerness to write, or paint, or compose music. . . . It was impossible to resist the glowing enthusiasm that sprang from the company of these famous men."

Grétry also had the strange good fortune of disarming that great enemy of French music, Jean-Jacques Rousseau. It is true that the friendship between the two was of short duration; for Rousseau's suspicious independence took offence at Grétry's over-eager and perhaps rather obsequious advances; and so he suddenly severed the acquaintanceship, and never saw him again.

The scene is perhaps worth recalling. It took place at a performance of *La Fausse Magie*. Rousseau was present, and word was brought to Grétry that the great man wished to see him. Grétry says:

" I hurried to him, and looked at him with emotion.

" ' I am so glad to see you,' he said ; ' for a long time I thought my heart was insensible to the pleasant sensations your music arouses. I would like to know you, sir ; or, rather, I would like to be your friend, since I already know you through your work.'

" ' Ah, sir,' I said, ' to please you by my work is the best reward I could have.'

" ' Are you married ? '

" ' Yes.'

" ' Have you married what is called *une femme d'esprit* (a clever wife) ? '

" ' No.'

" ' I thought as much ! '

" ' She is an artist's daughter ; she does not say what she feels, and nature is her guide.'

" ' I thought so. Oh, but I like artists ; they are nature's own children. I should like to see your wife ; and I hope I shall see you often.'

" I stayed beside Rousseau until the end of the performance ; and he pressed my hand two or three times. Then we went out together. I was far from thinking that that would be the last time I should speak to him ! As we were going down the rue Française he wished to clamber over some stones that the workmen had left. I took his arm, and said :

" ' Take care, monsieur Rousseau ! '

" He drew his arm sharply away and replied :

" ' Let me do what I like.'

"His words dumbfounded me. Some carriages came between us; he took his own road, and I took mine; and I have never spoken to him since."

. . . . . .

On the whole, and in spite of inevitable initial difficulties, Grétry was favoured by fate. His talents were quickly recognized. He himself says that his music was quietly established in France, without any feverish partisanship and without exciting puerile disputes. He did not belong to any of the pronounced parties which were then wrangling in Paris. "I wondered," he says, "if there was any means of pleasing everybody."

All Grétry's nature is expressed in that simple confession.

He had, of course, been present at some of the performances at the Opera, but had taken no great interest in them. It was the time of the interregnum between Rameau and Gluck. The former had just died, and the latter had not yet come to France. Grétry did not understand Rameau at all, and he was very bored by his works. He compared his airs to "out-of-date Italian airs."[1] He frequented the musical theatres in Paris, in order to get acquainted with the actors, and the range and quality of their voices, for he wished to turn his knowledge to account. But what he followed most carefully were the performances at the Théâtre-Français.

[1] Strange as this opinion may appear, it was shared by other musicians, both in France and Germany, and was not without a foundation of truth.

He was not content with simply hearing the great actors there, but tried to impress their declamation upon his memory: "This seems to me," he said, "the only guide that will serve me, and the only one which will help me to reach the goal I have set before me." Though he said nothing about it, there is every reason to believe that in this he was following Diderot, who all his life had set forth and upheld these ideas. At any rate Grétry deserves merit for understanding these principles and applying them better than anyone else had done up to that time.

> "It is at the Théâtre-Français, by the voices of great actors, that a musician learns to examine the passions, to scrutinize the human heart, to observe the stirrings of the soul. In that school he learns to know and express their true accents, to mark their nuances and limitations."[1]

One finds Grétry faithful to his principles, and later on noting down modulations of passages from *Andromache,* consulting Mlle Clairon about the duet in *Sylvain,* and imitating her intonations, her intervals, and her accents in music. Grétry himself

[1] This had also been Lully's idea (see page 176). I shall not dwell on this conception of musical recitative here. It is not without its dangers; for the declamation of great actors is not often modelled on what is natural; and even when it is fine and soul-stirring it seems to borrow from the theatre a rather conventional character which is far enough removed from ordinary speech. It may be that because Lully and Grétry were foreigners they took (as foreigners are apt to take) the declamation of the theatre or the pulpit as a model of French speech. If they had been Frenchmen by birth, they might have found a better model by listening to their own speech and the speech of those about them.

made the remark that if poets say that they sing when they speak, he might claim to speak when he sang. He always recited his verses before setting them to music.[1] In that way he says he observed the syllables that ought to be supported by the air, and so was able to find the notes that fitted the words. In short, for him, music was a discourse to be noted down.[2]

Such were the principles that he was able more and more skilfully to apply to his operas and *opéra-comiques* (the first of which was *Le Huron*, written in 1768[3]). It is not my intention, however, to study these operas here.

. . . . . .

The Revolution came and diminished Grétry's fortunes, but not his renown; for it covered him

[1] Grétry had already written and twice rewritten the famous trio in *Zémire et Azor*, "*Ah! laissez-moi la pleurer!*" and was not even then satisfied with it. Diderot came and heard the piece, and without either praising or finding fault with it, declaimed its words. "I changed the beginning of what I had done," says Grétry, "for notes that imitated Diderot's declamation, and the rest of the music came to me without any trouble. It would not always do to listen to Diderot and the abbé Arnaud when they give wings to their imagination; but the first flight of their fervent spirits is like a divine inspiration."

[2] "Music," he says elsewhere, "is, in a way, a kind of pantomime of the accents of words."

[3] That is without counting *Les Mariages Samnites*, which did not get as far as a general rehearsal.

I refer the reader to M. Michel Brenet's admirable little book, *Grétry, sa vie et ses œuvres* (1884), and M. Henri de Curzon's *Grétry* (1907). The Belgian Government have undertaken to publish a complete edition of Grétry's works; this has been in course of publication by Breitkopf and Härtel of Leipzig since 1884, under the direction of a committee of which M. Gevaert was the first chairman. Thirty-seven volumes have already appeared.

with honours, and his works were printed at the nation's expense; while Lakanel, in his report to the Convention, placed his name on "the list of citizens who have a right to national bounty on account of the service they have rendered to the useful arts of society." Grétry was therefore made a member of the National Institute of France and a superintendent of the Conservatoire. His muse now donned the cap of Liberty; and after having composed airs like those in *Richard Cœur de Lion*, whose memory is associated with the last Royalist manifestations at Versailles, Grétry turned his attention to *Barra*, *Denys le Tyran*, *La Rosière républicaine*, *La Fête de la Raison*, and hymns for national festivals.[1] Only the titles of his works were changed, for the music is the same—always amiably sentimental, of a nature dear to the people of the Reign of Terror, because it was a refuge from their fears, and supplied an antidote that their feverishness sorely needed.

The Revolution was not often mentioned in Grétry's *Mémoires*; for Grétry was a cautious man and did not like to commit himself. The few recollections of its terrors that he gives us are generally connected with music, and are put before us in a very striking way. I will copy out a few extracts. There are in them touches worthy of Shakespeare—we need not trouble about that, however, for they are not Grétry's own creation.

[1] Later on Grétry affirmed his "long-standing" Republicanism, in a work published in 1801, called *La Vérité, ou ce que nous fûmes, ce que nous sommes, ce que nous devrions être* (Truth, or what we were, what we are, and what we should be).

"During the four years of the Revolution, whenever my nerves were tired, I had at night the monotonous sound of an alarm-bell going in my head. In order to assure myself that it was not really an alarm-bell I used to stop up my ears; and if the sound continued (perhaps louder than ever), I came to the conclusion that it was only in my head."

"The military *cortège* that led Louis XVI to the scaffold passed under my windows; and the march in six-eight time, which the drums beat out in jerky rhythm, affected me so keenly by its contrast to the mournful occasion that I trembled all over."

"At this time . . . I was one evening returning from a garden in the Champs Elysées. I had been invited there to look at a beautiful lilac-tree in bloom. I was returning alone. As I drew near the place de la Révolution I suddenly heard the sound of music. I came a little nearer, and could distinguish violins, a flute, a tambourin, and the happy cries of dancers. A man who was walking by my side drew my attention to the guillotine. I looked up, and saw the deadly knife raised and lowered twelve or fifteen times without a pause. On one side were the rustic dancers, the scent of flowers, the soft air of spring, and the last rays of the setting sun; on the other side were the unhappy victims who would never know these delights again. . . . The picture was unforgettable. To avoid passing

through the square I hurried down the rue des Champs Élysées. But a cart with the corpses caught me up. . . . 'Peace and silence, citizens,' said the driver, with a laugh, 'they sleep.'"

. . . . . .

Other events occupied Grétry quite as much as the tragedies of his adopted country. Although wishing well to all, Grétry had not great breadth of sympathy; and I think in spite of his humanitarian protestations he did not much trouble himself about social questions. He was really made for "domestic happiness, so natural to a man born in a country of good people." His affectionate nature, which gives a kind of bourgeois charm to much of his work, was lavished upon three daughters whom he adored. He lost all of them; and the record of their death is among the finest pages of his *Mémoires*.

The unhappy man accused himself of being the cause of their death. "The hardships of an artist," he said, "are the death of his children. As a father he violates nature to attain perfection in his work; his lack of sleep and his difficulties sap his life; death claims his children before they are born."

His daughters were called Jenni, Lucile, and Antoinette. Jenni, the eldest, was of a sweet and open nature, but she was so delicate that "she ought to have been left to vegetate in pleasant idleness." However, she was made to work. Grétry reproached himself for it bitterly, and believed that the work killed her:

"When she was fifteen she just knew how to read and write, and she had some knowledge of geography, the harpsichord, solfeggio, and Italian. But she sang like an angel; and her style in singing was the only thing she had not been taught. . . . At the age of sixteen she quietly died, though she believed that her failing health was a sign that she was getting well."

On the day of her death she wished to write to a friend to tell her that she was going to a ball.

"Then she fell into her last sleep, sitting on my knee. . . . I held her pressed against my aching heart for a quarter of an hour. . . . Every work I have produced is watered by my blood. I wished for glory, I wished to help my poor parents, to keep alive the mother so dear to me. Nature gave me what I so earnestly desired, only to avenge herself on my children."

The second girl, Lucile, was quite the opposite of Jenni; for she was so full of activity that "to stop her from working was enough to kill her. . . . She always went to extremes, and was rebellious and irritable." She composed music; among other things two little pieces, *Le Mariage d'Antonio* (which was written when she was thirteen, and played at the Théâtre des Italiens in 1786) and *Louis et Toinette*. Grétry tells us that Pergolesi praised the little *bravura* air in *Le Mariage d'Antonio*. When Lucile was composing, she used to sing and cry and play her harp with feverish energy.

Grétry says he nearly wept with pleasure and wonder to see this small child carried away by so fine an enthusiasm for her art. She became annoyed when inspirations would not come. "So much the better," Grétry would reply, "that is a proof that you do not want to do anything that is commonplace." She trembled when her father looked at her work; and he indicated her faults very gently. She did not trouble much about dress; "all her happiness was found in reading and verse, and in the music she loved so passionately." Her parents thought it well to marry her early. But her marriage was unhappy, and her husband did not treat her kindly. She died after two troubled years of suffering.

Antoinette was now the only one left; and Grétry and his wife fearfully cherished their last happiness. When anything happened to Antoinette both were terribly upset. "Very often she laughed at us, and played us some trick, in order to cure us of our excessive care for her." Grétry vowed that she should do whatever she pleased. She was pretty, gay, and full of intelligence. She did not wish to be married; and she used often to think of her sisters without saying anything about it. All three girls had been devoted to one another. When Lucile was ill, she would often exclaim, "My poor Jenni!" And when Antoinette was dying, she would say, "Ah, poor Lucile!"

Grétry and his wife and Antoinette made several little expeditions from Paris. Once when they went to Lyons she was nearly drowned in the Saône,

and her father was nearly drowned, too, in his endeavour to save her. In the autumn of 1790, while at Lyons, she began to lose her appetite and her high spirits. Her parents remarked this with terror, and often wept in secret. They suggested that a return should be made to Paris. "Yes," said Antoinette, "let us go back to Paris, for there I shall rejoin those I love." These words alarmed Grétry, for he thought she was thinking of her sisters. Poor Antoinette felt she was dying, and sought to hide the fact from those about her; and she would talk gaily of her future and of the children she would have, or pretend to want to dance and put on pretty clothes.

> "One day, one of my friends, Rouget de Lisle, happened to be at my house, and remarked how happy I must be to have so beautiful a child. 'Yes,' I whispered; 'she is beautiful, and she is going to a ball, and in a few weeks she will be in her grave.'"

Not long afterwards she was seized with fever, and for a few days was delirious, and thought she was at a ball, or out for a walk with her sisters; but she was quite happy, and she pitied her parents.

> "She was in bed when she spoke to us of these things for the last time. Then she lay down and closed her beautiful eyes, and left us and went to her sisters. . . .
>
> "Out of pity for me, my wife summoned up courage to resume our ordinary existence. She

returned to her painting, which she had been fond of, and painted the portraits of her daughters, and afterwards other subjects, in order to occupy herself, in order to live. . . .

" This went on for three years. . . . Twenty times I was on the point of throwing away my pen as I wrote this ; but perhaps from parental weakness, or in the hope my friends would shed a tear for the memory of my dear daughters, I sketched this sad picture ; though I really should not have tried to do so for some years to come. . . .

" This is fame ! Fancied immortality is won by actual sorrow. Unnatural happiness is bought at the price of real happiness. To live a few days in men's memories ; but to be without posterity. . . ."

I hope I may be forgiven for these quotations. The history of music may not have much to do with such things ; but music itself is something more than a question of technique. If we really love music, it is because it is the most intimate utterance of the soul, and its expression of joy and pain. I do not know which I like the better—Beethoven's finest sonata, or the tragic *Testament d'Heiligenstadt.* The one is equal to the other. The passages I have quoted are the finest things that Grétry ever wrote, finer than his music ; for the unhappy man put himself into them, and forgot actors and their declamation. (Think of imitating actors ! What a confession of weakness for a musician-poet ! Why did he not let his heart do all

the talking ?) In these pages he really lets himself speak ; and so they have a peculiar value for us.

As for the rest of Grétry's life, there is little to say about it. He made an honourable confession—and it must have been painful to his self-respect as an artist.

> "After this terrible blow, the fever that had been consuming me abated. But I found that my love of music was less and that sorrow had nearly killed my imagination. And so I have written these books, because the work in them meant using my will rather than my imagination."[1]

In spite of everything, this man pleased everybody—as he naïvely wished to—but by instinct rather than by calculation ; and he had the good fortune to please, not only the king and the revolutionaries, but Napoleon as well, although he was a man who had no great liking for French music. He received from him a good pension and the Cross of the Legion of Honour, just after that order had

[1] Grétry afterwards wrote some small operas, the best of which was *Anacréon*, produced in 1797. But he knew how "to leave his public before his public left him," as his pupil Mme de Bawr says.

He had really lost all interest in music, and turned his mind almost entirely to literature. He perplexed himself with questions of philosophy, morality, and politics ; and he daily set down his ideas in bulky note-books, without order or connection, though not without some ingenuousness and understanding. Among his works were *La Vérité*, before-mentioned, published in 1801, and eight manuscript volumes called *Réflexions d'un Solitaire*, of which only a quarter have been preserved. M. Charles Malherbe had the good fortune to find the fourth volume, which had been lost sight of, and he has published extracts from it in the *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Théâtre* (1907–1908).

been instituted. He lived to see a street in Paris named after him, and his statue erected at the Opéra-Comique. And lastly he had the happiness of buying L'Ermitage, which had belonged to his loved Jean-Jacques Rousseau ; and there he died on September 24, 1813.

. . . . . .

One would need to write several tomes in order to examine all the clever, absurd, and interesting ideas which swarmed in Grétry's active brain. His fertility of invention is incredible. After reading his books one wonders what there could be left to imagine. We get amusing inventions in physics and musical mechanics ; a rhythmometer for marking time ; a musical barometer, worked by a single string of cat-gut, which expanded or contracted according to the weather, and by means of two springs connected with a cylinder set going some pipes, which played two airs—a lively one in a major key for fine weather, and a slow one in a minor key for rain. He had theories about occultism and telepathy ; on the use of music in medicine, particularly in nervous maladies and madness ; on heredity ;[1] and on diet, which he thought had a great influence on character :

> " One could almost be sure of making a man bad-tempered, calm, foolish, or clever, if regular attention was paid to his diet and his education."[2]

[1] " If on a long sea voyage your father has lived away from the society of women. . . ."
" If he has eaten very much salted food. . . ."

[2] He praises a milk diet very much.

His conception of happiness anticipates Tolstoy's :

> " The wisest men come to see at last that by making sacrifices for others we deserve to have sacrifices made for us. ' But,' you will say, ' in that way we should only live to make sacrifices.' Yes ; in that lies one's general happiness—there is no other."

Let us turn to his thoughts on music. There are plenty of them—for the most part rough ideas thrown out in passing, though they are suggestive, deep, and often prophetic.

What he considered his most important discovery comes at the beginning and end of his *Mémoires ;* it is the idea that the first principle of music is sincerity of declamation. For Grétry looked upon music as an expressive language, almost as an exact art, whose basis was psychology—the study of character and emotion.[1] We will consider this idea presently.

Then we get the idea of an overture with a programme, of the psychological and dramatic entr'acte, which epitomizes what has gone before or suggests what is to follow. We have also the notation of the emotions in music, which leads him to explain in two or three hundred pages the way in which a musician may express Friendship, Maternal Love,

[1] He ended up, however, by being dissatisfied with music. His mind was so much in love with precision that it sought other means of expression. " I frankly admit," he says, " that musical expression is at present too vague for me ; and now that I have reached old age I must have something more positive " (*La Vérité, ou ce que nous fûmes*).

Shame, Anger, Avarice, Gaiety, Indolence, Jealousy, the Villain, the Hypocrite, the Boaster, the Absent-minded Man, the Hypochondriac, the Flatterer, the Sarcastic Man, the Simpleton, the Optimist, the Pessimist, and so forth—in short every variety in the Human Comedy.[1] Thus he carved a way for a musical Molière, whom we still await—a musician who ought to come, and who will come; for all is ready for him and only the genius is wanting.

Grétry also analysed the materials for expression which music then had at its command. This included the psychology of tones and instrumental timbres; orchestration expressive of character; the agreement between colour and sound; and the wonderful power that pure music, the symphony of the orchestra, had in uncovering hearts and disclosing emotions which the singing did not reveal.

The following quotation gives some idea of Grétry's ideas about the psychology of tone:

> "The scale of C major is fine and outspoken; that of C minor is pathetic. The scale of D major is brilliant; that of D minor is melancholy. The scale of E flat major is noble and sad. The scale of E major is as bright as the preceding scale is noble and gloomy. The scale of E minor is slightly melancholy. That of F major is moderately sad; that of F in minor thirds is the saddest of all. The scale of F sharp major is

[1] Grétry considered the problem of expressing the differences of race; but as he himself knew little about different races, he only touched the surface of the matter.

hard, because it is full of accidentals; and the same scale in the minor has also some of that quality. The scale of G is warlike, but has not the nobility of C major; the scale of G minor comes next to F in minor thirds for sadness. The scale of A major is brilliant, but in the minor it is the most graceful of all. That of B flat is noble, but not so great as that of C major, and more pathetic than that of F in major thirds. That of B natural is brilliant and playful; that of B minor in thirds expresses simplicity. . . ."

If this psychological ladder of tones is compared with Rameau's (see page 271), it will be seen that the two do not correspond, and that, in consequence, the interest of the subject is a subjective one, concerned with each musician's sensibilities and auditory reactions. If I may be permitted to make a personal observation, I venture to say that Grétry's analysis is nearer to our own conception of tones than Rameau's.

Grétry examined, in the same way, the psychological effect of different musical instruments:

"The clarinet is suited to the expression of sorrow; and even when it plays a merry air there is a suggestion of sadness about it. If I were to dance in a prison, I should wish to do so to the accompaniment of a clarinet. The hautboy, with its rustic gaiety, gives us a ray of hope in the midst of anguish. The German flute is tender and affectionate . . ." and so forth.

There are also observations on the differences of musical sensibility. Take, for instance, those connected with the bassoon :

" The bassoon is lugubrious, and should be employed in what is sad, even when only a slight suggestion of sadness is desired ; for it seems to me the opposite of all that is purely gay."[1]

" When Andromache sings (in the opera of that name) she is nearly always accompanied by three German flutes, forming a harmony. . . . I believe this is the first time that anyone has thought of accompanying some special part with one kind of instrument."[2]

As an example of the power of instruments to reveal what is not evident in song, Grétry says :

" A young girl assures her mother that she knows nothing about love ; but while she is affecting indifference in her simple song, the orchestra expresses the anguish of love in her heart. Does a simpleton wish to express his love or his courage ? If he is truly roused, his voice will be full of feeling ; but the orchestra by its monotonous accompaniment will reveal his true character. Generally speaking, emotion should be shown in the song ; but the accompaniment should express the mind, the gestures, and the aspect."

[1] We know the successful use modern composers have made of this instrument for comic and burlesque effects.

[2] Grétry was not aware that similar effects had been tried by the Italian masters of the seventeenth century.

Referring to a "colour harpsichord," invented by Father Castel, a Jesuit, Grétry says :

> "A sensitive musician will find all colours in the harmony of sounds. The solemn or minor keys will affect his ear in the same way that gloomy colours affect his eye ; and the sharp keys will seem like bright and glaring colours. Between these two extremes one may find all the other colours, which are contained in music just as they are in painting, and belong to the expression of different emotions and different characters."

With Grétry, a scale common to colours and sounds was that of the emotions, different expressions of which bring different colours to the human face. "Purple red indicates anger ; a paler red accompanies shyness . . . etc."

All this is in Grétry's own domain—the land of polished *opéra-comique*, where he was able to put to such good use his talents and his mental ingenuity; and though at times they almost overreached themselves in a desire for excessive clearness, they led him to read in the music of others and in the least inflexions of the voice, as in a book. "Music," he said, "is a thermometer, which enables us to ascertain the degree of sensibility in either a race or an individual."

But he had other ideas that were really outside the province of his art. At the same time as Mozart (though without knowing that Mozart's thoughts were like his own) he dreamed of a *duodrama*—of

" a musical tragedy, where the dialogue would be spoken," a kind of " melodrama " with genius in it. He also thought of a hidden orchestra ; of huge theatres for the people (which we have only just begun to consider), of national games and great popular fêtes, which we are now trying to institute after the fashion of those of ancient Greece and modern Switzerland. He thought of dramatic schools, where actors and actresses could be taught ; and of public musical lectures, where unpublished scenes and fragments of new works by young and unknown dramatic composers could be submitted to the criticism of an audience. He worked to get music the place in education that it is getting now ; and he insisted on the importance of singing in primary schools. He wanted to found an Opera-House, where forgotten masterpieces should be played. He was—as one would expect in so sensitive a man—a feminist in art, and vigorously encouraged women to apply themselves to musical composition.

A still more remarkable fact is that this musician who loved clearness to excess, who was especially fitted to write music to concisely worded verse, who seemed of all musicians to be farthest from the spirit of the symphony, who sometimes spoke of symphonies with scorn, and placed their composers far below dramatic authors, and who believed that if Haydn had met Diderot he would have written operas instead of symphonies—this strange man felt, nevertheless, the beauty of symphonic music. He says :

"That gentle disquiet that good instrumental music causes us, that vague reproduction of our emotion, that aerial voyage which leaves us suspended in space without fatigue to our bodies, that mysterious language which speaks to our senses without using reasoning, and which is as good as reason, since it charms us—all this is a delight which is very good and pure."[1]

And he quotes in this connection the famous passage from the *Merchant of Venice* about the power of music. For, in passing, I may remark that he loved Shakespeare, and would go into raptures over Richard III. For Hadyn he had a great admiration, and in his symphonies saw a store of musical expression which might be of inestimable value to composers of operas.[2]

That is not all. Although Grétry wrote neither symphonies nor chamber-music, he speaks of both with the insight of an innovator and a genius. He demands freedom for instrumental forms, and the liberty of the sonata:

"A sonata is a discourse. What should we think of a man who, cutting his discourse in half,

[1] Grétry also said that music whose expression was vague had perhaps a more mysterious charm than declaimed music. And in another place he says: "Whatever Fontenelle may have said, we know the value of a good sonata, or one of Haydn's or Gossec's symphonies."

[2] "It seems to me that a dramatic composer may look upon Haydn's innumerable works as a vast dictionary, from whence he may, without scruple, borrow materials; though he should not make use of these materials unless he adds the intimate expression of speech to them. The composer of a symphony is, in this case, like a botanist who has discovered a plant, leaving a doctor to find out its properties."

repeated each part of it twice over? That is how these repetitions in music affect me."

He shows how the archaic symmetry of these forms may be broken, and more life put into them. In this way he anticipates Beethoven's efforts. He also anticipates Tschaikowsky's *Symphonie pathétique*, which finishes by a slow movement. And he is not far from foreseeing M. Saint-Saëns' *Symphonie avec orgue*.[1] Further still, he prophesies the dramatic symphonies of Berlioz, Liszt, and Richard Strauss—works of art which were at the opposite end of the pole to his own compositions.

"What I am about to suggest bids fair to achieve a dramatic revolution. . . . May not music be given liberty to soar as it pleases, to make finished pictures, and, in using its advantages to the full, not be forced to follow verse through all its shades of meaning? . . . What musical amateur has not felt admiration for Haydn's beautiful symphonies? A hundred times have I put words to them, for it was what they seemed to demand. Why should a musician be a prisoner, and follow his imagination in fetters? . . . If a dramatic scene were given to Haydn, his spirit would kindle over each part of it; but he would only follow its general sentiment and exercise entire liberty in the composition of his music. . . . When a musician has written out his score . . . his work is performed by the full

[1] He at any rate recommends the use of the organ in the orchestra.

orchestra. . . . Then the poet reads the meaning of his words in the music ; and the auditors must often say to themselves, ' I guessed that,' or ' I felt as much. . . .' Such a work succeeds beyond one's expectations. . . . I am pointing out a way by which composers of instrumental music may equal, if not surpass, us in dramatic art."

Grétry has, without doubt, spoiled his conception by wishing to graft new operas on to dramatic symphonies, and by asking that poets should adapt words to works of pure music, which are already poems in themselves. But in a flash of genius he had a glimpse of the astonishing development, during the last three-quarters of a century, of poems and sound-paintings—of *Tondichtung* and *Tonmalerei*.

If Grétry's own powers of musical creation had equalled his intellectual insight, he might have been one of the finest composers in the world ; for in this spirit of ancient France we find one side of the musical evolution of the nineteenth century, and the meeting of Pergolesi's art with the art of Wagner, Liszt, and Richard Strauss.

. . . . . .

Towards the end of his life, this pleasant musician with his Louis XVI style took fright at the new ideas which began to appear in music. Along with his rivals, Méhul, Cherubini, and Lesueur, he was alarmed at the growing romanticism, the irruption of noise and passion, of overloaded harmonies, of

jerky rhythms, of boisterous orchestration, of "unintermittent fever," of chaos—in short, "of music," as he said, "fired off like cannon-balls."[1] He believed that a reaction towards simplicity was pending. However, this restlessness, instead of abating, grew worse; and the public grew kindly disposed towards it. Out of this chaos Beethoven was to come, and Lesueur was to have Berlioz as his pupil.

Grétry did not foresee anyone like Beethoven.[2] All his hopes were set on quite another kind of genius; and I will give a last quotation from his writings, where with passionate faith he foretells the advent of this genius and bids him welcome.

> "What will he who comes after us be like? In imagination I see a man endowed with a delightful talent for melody, with a head and soul filled with musical ideas; a man who will not violate the rules of drama that are so well known to musicians to-day, but unite a splendid naturalness with the harmonic richness of our young champions. I long for this being with greater earnestness than Abraham's son longed

[1] "My colleagues, Méhul, Lemoine, Cherubini, and Lesueur, all agree with me that harmony to-day is terribly complicated; that singers and instrumentalists alike have overstepped the bounds of their natural scope; that their execution is so rapid it is in danger of spoiling music for the ear; and, in fine, that we are on the verge of chaos."

[2] Although M. F. de Lacerda says he recognizes the theme of the Ode to Joy from the Ninth Symphony, as well as a characteristic instrumental design in the Pastoral Symphony, in the overture of *La Rosière de Salency*.

for his Messiah of deliverance ; I open my arms to him, and in my old age the manly sincerity of his utterance shall comfort me."

We know this musical Messiah. Grétry was sure that he was already in existence. And so he was ; and he died not far away. His name was Mozart ; but he is not once mentioned in Grétry's writings. We need not be surprised, for, alas, in the history of art such things are common. Kindred souls may live close to one another without knowing it ; and it is left to us to discover the lost friendships of the dead.

MOZART

ACCORDING TO HIS LETTERS[1]

I HAVE just been reading Mozart's letters for the second time (in the French translation by M. Henri de Curzon[2]), and I think they ought to be included among the books of every library, for they are not only of interest to artists, but instructive for other people as well. If you read these letters, Mozart will be your friend for life; his kind face will show itself in moments of trouble, and when you are miserable you will hear his merry boyish laugh, and blush to give way to dark moods as you think of what he himself so courageously endured. Let us recall his memory; it is fast slipping into shadow.

. . . . .

The first thing that strikes us is his wonderful moral health. This is the more surprising, because physically he was far from strong. All his faculties seem extraordinarily well balanced: his soul was

[1] I beg that this essay (already a little old) may only be regarded as a rough sketch, something like the one Dora Stock made of Mozart in 1789. I hope later on to make a study worthier of his memory; meanwhile I should like his calm figure to be the last portrait of these masters of opera in bygone days.

[2] *Mozart's Briefe*, published by Ludwig Nohl, 1865; third edition, 1877.

full of feeling, and yet master of itself; his mind was wonderfully calm, even in events like his mother's death, and his love for Constance Weber; his intellect was clear, and instinctively grasped what people liked and the best way to achieve success; and he was able to bring his proud genius to conquer the world's affections without hurt to himself.

This moral balance is rare in passionate natures; for all passion is excess of feeling. Mozart had every kind of feeling, but he had no passion—except his terrible pride and a strong consciousness of his genius.

"The archbishop of Salzburg thinks you are steeped in pride," said a friend to him one day.

Mozart did not seek to conceal this pride; and to those who hurt it he replied with an arrogance worthy of one of Rousseau's republican contemporaries. "It is the heart that gives a man nobility," he said, "and if I am not a count, I have perhaps more honour in me than many a count. And whether it is a valet or a count, he becomes a low scoundrel from the moment he insults me."[1] In 1777, when he was twenty-one years old, he said to two would-be jokers who laughed at his Cross of the Golden Spur, "It would be easier for me to get all the decorations that you could possibly receive, than for you to become what I am now, even if you died and were born again twice over." "I was boiling with rage," he added.

[1] "*Das Herz adelt den Menschen; und wenn ich schon kein Graf bin, so habe ich vielleicht mehr Ehre im Leib als mancher Graf. Und Hausknecht oder Graf, sobald er mich beschimpft, so ist er ein Hundsfott*" (June 20, 1781).

He used carefully to keep and sometimes calmly quote all the flattering things that were said about him. In 1782, he said to a friend, " Prince Kaunitz told the archduke that people like myself only came into the world once in a hundred years."

He was capable of intense hate when his pride was wounded. He suffered greatly at the idea of being in the service of a prince : " The thought is intolerable," he said (October 15, 1778). After he had heard the archbishop of Salzburg's remark, " he trembled all over, and reeled in the street like a drunken man. He was obliged to go home and get to bed ; and he was still not himself on the following morning " (May 12, 1781). " I hate the archbishop with all my soul," he said ; and later on he remarked, " If anyone offends me I must revenge myself ; and unless I revenge myself with interest I consider I have only repaid my enemy and not corrected him."

When his pride was at stake, or rather when his inclination was likely to be thwarted, this respectful and obedient son only owned the authority of his own desires.

> " I did not recognize my father in a single line of your letter. It was certainly a letter from a father ; but it was not from *my* father " (May 19, 1781).

And he got married before he had received his father's consent (August 7, 1782).

If you take away Mozart's great passion for pride, you will find him a pleasant and cheerful soul. He had quick sympathies and the gentleness of a woman—or rather of a child, for he was given to tears and laughter, to teasing, and all the tricks of a warm-hearted boy.

Usually he was very lively, and amused at nothing in particular ; he had difficulty in keeping still, and was always singing and jumping about, nearly killing himself with laughter over anything funny, or even over things that were not funny. He loved good jokes and bad ones (especially the bad ones, and sometimes the coarse ones), was without malice or *arrière pensée*, and enjoyed the sound of words without any sense in them : " Stru ! Stri ! . . . Knaller paller. . . . Schnip. . . . Schnap. . . . Schnur. . . . Schnepeperl ! . . . Snai ! " is what we find in the letter of July 6, 1791. In 1769 he writes :

> " I am simply bursting with joy because this journey amuses me so much ! . . . because it is so hot in the carriage ! . . . and because our coachman is a good lad and drives like the wind when the road allows it ! "

One may find hundreds of examples of his merriment at nothing at all, and of the laughter that comes from good health. The blood flowed freely in his veins, and his feelings were not over-sensitive.

> " I saw four rogues hung to-day on the square by the cathedral. *They hang them here as they do at Lyons* " (November 30, 1770).

He had not very wide sympathy—that "humanity" of modern artists. He loved those he knew—his father, his wife, and his friends; and he loved them tenderly, and spoke of them with ardent affection, so that one's heart is warmed as it is by his music.[1]

> "When my wife and I were married we burst into tears, and everyone else was so affected by our emotion that they wept, too" (August 7, 1782).

He had a splendid capacity for friendship, as only those who have been poor understand friendship. He himself says:

> "Our best and truest friends are those who are poor. Rich people know nothing of friendship" (August 7, 1778).
>
> "Friend? (he says elsewhere) I only call that man a friend who, whatever the occasion, thinks of nothing but his friend's welfare, and does all he can to make him happy" (December 18, 1778).

His letters to his wife, especially those written between 1789 and 1791, are full of loving affection and mad gaiety; and he seems unaffected by the illness, cares, and terrible distress that went to make up this most cruel portion of his life. "*Immer zwischen Angst und Hoffung*" (Always between anxiety and hope),[2] he says; but he does not say

[1] See his letters about his mother's death, and especially the one written July 9, 1778.

[2] July 17, 1788. See his letters to Puchberg, and his constant requests for money. Both he and his wife were ill; and there

it, as you might think, in a kind of valiant effort to reassure his wife and deceive her as to his true circumstances; the words come from an irresistible desire to laugh, which he cannot conquer, and which he had to satisfy even in the midst of the worst of his troubles.[1] His laughter is very near to tears —those happy tears that well up from a loving nature.

He was very happy, though no life could have been harder than his. It was a perpetual fight against sickness and misery. Death put an end to it—when he was thirty-five years old. Where could his happiness come from?

Well, first of all, from his religion, which was sound and free from all superstition, a firm, strong kind of faith, which doubt had never injured, though it may have touched it. It was also a calm and peaceful faith, without passion or mysticism: *Credo quia verum.* To his dying father he wrote:

> "I am counting on good news, although I make a practice of always imagining the worst. As death is the true purpose of life, I have, for many years, made myself familiar with that best friend of man; and his face has now no

were children, and no money was in the house. His takings at concerts were ridiculous. A subscription list for his concerts was sent round for a fortnight, and not a single name was entered on it. Mozart's pride suffered cruelly at having to beg; but he had no choice: "If you abandon me, we are lost," he said (July 12 and 14, 1789).

[1] Even in the letter he wrote to his father, telling him of his mother's death in Paris—a letter written in great grief—he could not help expressing much mirth at some joke he had heard (July 9, 1778).

longer any terror for me, but is, if anything, calm and consoling to look upon. I thank God for this blessing . . . and I never go to bed without thinking that perhaps on the morrow I may no longer be alive. And yet no one who knows me could say that I am sad or discontented. I give thanks to my Creator for this happiness, and hope with all my heart my fellow-creatures may share it " (April 4, 1787).

So he found happiness in the thought of eternity. His happiness on earth was in the love of those about him, and especially in his love for them. In writing to his wife, he says :

" If I may only feel that you lack nothing, all my troubles will be precious to me and even pleasant. Yes ! the most painful and complicated of difficulties would seem nothing but a trifle if I were sure that you were happy and in good health " (July 6, 1791).

But Mozart's true happiness was in creation.

In restless and unhealthy geniuses creation may be a torture—the bitter seeking after an elusive ideal. But with healthy geniuses like Mozart creation was a perfect joy, and so natural that it seemed almost a physical enjoyment. Composing was as important for his health as eating, drinking, and sleeping. It was a need, a necessity—a happy necessity, since he was able continually to satisfy it.

It is well to understand this, if one would understand the passages in the letters about money.

> "Rest assured that my sole aim is to get as much money as possible; for, after health, it is the most precious possession" (April 4, 1781).

This may seem a low ideal. But one must not forget that Mozart lacked money all his life—and in this way his imagination was hampered, and his health suffered in consequence; so that he was always obliged to think of success and of the money that would make him free. Nothing could be more natural. If Beethoven acted differently it was because his idealism carried him to another world and way of living—an unreal world (if we except the rich patrons who made secure his daily bread). But Mozart loved life and the world and the reality of things. He wished to live and conquer; and conquer he did—for living was not exactly under his control.

The most wonderful fact about Mozart was that he directed his art towards success, without any sacrifice of himself; and his music was always written with regard to its effect upon the public. Somehow it does not lose by this, and it says exactly what he wishes it to say. In this he was helped by his delicate perceptions, his shrewdness, and his sense of irony. He despised his audience, but he held himself in great esteem. He made no concessions that he need blush for; he deceived the public, but he guided it as well.[1] He gave people

[1] "Take no account of what is called the populace: in my opera there is music for all kinds of people, except for those with long ears" (December 16, 1780).

"There are here and there passages which will only give

the illusion that they understood his ideas; while, as a matter of fact, the applause that greeted his works was excited only by passages which were solely composed for applause. And what matter? So long as there was applause the work was successful, and the composer was free to create new works.

. . . . . .

"Composing," said Mozart, "is my one joy and passion" (October 10, 1777).

This fortunate genius seemed born to create. Few other examples are to be found of such robust artistic health; for one must not confound his extraordinary gift for composition with the indolent imagination of a man like Rossini. Bach worked perseveringly; and he used to say to his friends: "I am obliged to work; and whoever works as hard as I do will succeed quite as well as I." Beethoven had to fight with all his strength when in the throes of composition. If his friends surprised

pleasure to connoisseurs; but they are written in such a way that those who are not connoisseurs will get enjoyment out of them without knowing why" (December 28, 1782).

"What I have done of my opera has been an extraordinary success everywhere, for I know my public" (September 19, 1781).

"The janissaries' chorus was written entirely for the Viennese" (September 29, 1781).

"Then comes (at the end of the first act of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*) a *pianissimo* which should be taken very quickly, and a conclusion which should make a good deal of noise. That is all that is needed for the end of an act: the more noise there is, the better it goes; and the shorter it is, the better it goes, for then people do not let their applause get cold" (September 26, 1781).

him at work, they often found him in a state of extreme exhaustion : " his features were distorted, sweat ran down his face, and he seemed," said Schindler, " as if he were doing battle with an army of contrapuntists." It is true the reference here is to his *Credo* and *Mass in D*. Nevertheless, he was always making sketches of things, thinking them over, erasing or correcting what he had done, beginning all over again, or putting a couple of notes to the *adagio* of some sonata which he was supposed to have finished long ago, and which had perhaps even been printed.

Mozart knew nothing of these torments.[1] He was able to do what he wished, and he never wished to do what was beyond him. His work is like a sweet scent in his life—perhaps like a beautiful flower whose only care is to live.[2] So easy was creation to him, that at times it poured from him in a double or triple stream, and he performed incredible feats of mental activity without thinking about them. He would compose a prelude while writing a fugue ; and once when he played a sonata for pianoforte and violin at a concert, he composed it the day before, between eleven o'clock and midnight, hurriedly writing the violin part, and having no time to write down the piano part or to re-

[1] I am not pretending that he did not work hard. He himself said to Kucharz, in 1787, that no one could be a great master of music without intense application and constant study. " No one," he added, " has laboured harder than I in the study of composition." But actual musical creation was not hard work for him ; it was like the flowering of his labours.

[2] The care was real enough, as we have already seen.

hearse it with his partner. The next day he played from memory what he had composed in his head (April 8, 1781). This is only one of many examples.

Such genius was likely to be spread over the whole domain of his art and in equal perfection. He was, however, especially fitted for musical drama. If we recall the chief traits in his nature, we find that he had a sane and well-balanced spirit, dominated by a strong, calm determination, and that he was without excess of passion, yet had fine perceptions and versatility. Such a man, if he has creative gifts, is best able to express life in an objective way. He is not bothered by the unreasonableness of a more passionate nature, which feels it must pour itself out in everything alike. Beethoven remained Beethoven on every page of his work; and it was well, for no other hero could interest us as he did. But Mozart, thanks to the happy mixture of his qualities—sensibility, shrewd perception, gentleness, and self-control—was naturally fitted to understand the differences of character in others, to interest himself in the fashionable world of his time, and to reproduce it with poetic insight in his music. His soul was at peace within him, and no inner voice clamoured to be heard. He loved life, and was a keen observer of the world he lived in; and it cost him no effort to reproduce what he saw.

His gifts shine brightest in his dramatic works; and he seemed to feel this, for his letters tell us of his preference for dramatic composition:

"Simply to hear anyone speak of an opera, or to be in the theatre, or to hear singing, is enough to make me beside myself!" (October 11, 1777).

"I have a tremendous desire to write an opera" (*Idem*).

"I am jealous of anyone who writes an opera. Tears come to my eyes when I hear an operatic air.... My one idea is to write operas" (February 2 and 7, 1778).

"Opera to me comes before everything else" (August 17, 1782).

. . . . . .

Let us see how Mozart conceived an opera.

To begin with, he was purely and simply a musician. There is very little trace of literary education or taste in him, such as we find in Beethoven, who taught himself, and did it well.[1] One cannot say he was more of a musician than anything else, for he was really nothing but a musician. He did not long trouble his head about the difficult question of the association of poetry and music in drama. He quickly decided that where music was there could be no rival.

[1] He had been, nevertheless, carefully educated. He knew a little Latin, and he had learnt French, Italian, and English. We hear of him reading *Télémaque*, and he makes an allusion to *Hamlet*. In his library he had Molière's and Metastasio's works, and the poems of Ovid, Wieland, Ewald von Kleist, Moses Mendelssohn's *Phädon*, and the works of Frederick II; besides books about mathematics and algebra, which had an especial attraction for him. But if his interests were wider than Beethoven's, and his knowledge more extensive, he had not Beethoven's literary gifts and taste for poetry.

" In an opera, it is absolutely imperative that poetry should be the obedient daughter of music " (October 13, 1781).

Later he says :

" Music reigns like a king, and the rest is of no account."

But that does not mean Mozart was not interested in his libretto, and that music was such a pleasure to him that the poem was only a pretext for the music. Quite the contrary : Mozart was convinced that opera should truthfully express characters and feelings ; but he thought that it was the musician's duty to achieve this, and not the poet's. That was because he was more of a musician than a poet ; and because his genius made him jealous of sharing his work with another artist.

" I cannot express either my feelings or my thoughts in verse, for I am neither a poet nor a painter. But I can do this with sounds, for I am a musician " (November 8, 1777).

So poetry to Mozart simply furnished " a well-made plan," dramatic situations, " obedient " words, and words written expressly for music. The rest was the composer's affair, and he, according to Mozart, had at his disposal an utterance as exact as poetry, and one that was quite as profound in its own way.[1]

[1] Compare Mendelssohn's words : " Notes have a meaning as precise as words, although the meaning cannot be translated into words."

When Mozart wrote an opera his intentions were quite clear. He took the trouble to annotate several passages in *Idomeneo* and *Die Entführung aus dem Serail;* and his intelligent care for psychological analysis is clearly shown:

> "As Osmin's anger [1] steadily increases, and the audience imagines that the air is nearly ended, the *Allegro assai* with its different time and different style should make a good effect; for a man carried away by such violent rage knows no longer what he is about and is bereft of his right senses; so the music should also seem to be beside itself" (September 26, 1781).

Referring to the air *O wie ängstlich,* in the same opera, Mozart says:

> "The beating of the heart is announced beforehand by octaves on the violins. The trembling irresolution and anguish of heart is expressed by a *crescendo;* and whisperings and sighs are given out by muted first violins and a flute in unison" (September 26, 1781).

Where will such seeking for truth of expression stop? Will it ever stop? Will Music be always like anguish and beating of the heart? Yes; so long as this emotion is harmonious.

Because he was altogether a musician, Mozart did not allow poetry to make demands upon his music; and he would even force a dramatic situation

[1] Air No. 3 in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail.*

to adapt itself to his music when there was any sign that it would overstep the limits of what he considered good taste.[1]

> " Passions, whether violent or not, should never be expressed when they reach an unpleasant stage; and music, even in the most terrible situations, should never offend the ear, but should charm it, and always remain Music " (September 26, 1781).

Thus music is a painting of life, but of a refined sort of life. And melodies, though they are the reflection of the spirit, must charm the spirit without wounding the flesh or " offending the ear." And so, according to Mozart, music is the harmonious expression of life.[2]

[1] And also because he was a musician and felt the links between poetry and music were hampering to his liberty, Mozart thought of reconstructing opera, of replacing it, as Diderot had tried to do in 1773, by a sort of " melodrama," which he called *Duodrama*, where music and poetry should be in friendly harmony, but should remain independent of each other and move only upon parallel lines. " I always wanted to write music for a duodrama," he says. " There would be no singing in it; but there would be declamation, and the music would be like an indispensable recitative. Sometimes there would be speech with a musical accompaniment, and that would make a splendid impression " (November 12, 1778).

[2] In criticizing Mozart we must not forget to distinguish what are pure melodies from the formulas that encase them. These formulas are sometimes rather commonplace, though they are in good enough taste. They are used in order to make a tinsel-loving public accept a beauty too refined for its natural taste. Mozart says this himself in his letters. And so if we find some very ordinary phrases plastered on to the end of a piece of music, we must not misjudge the sincerity of the whole. Mozart only makes concessions in points of lesser importance; he never tinkers with his deepest emotions and the things hat he values.

This is not only true of Mozart's operas, but of all his work.[1] His music, whatever it may seem to do, is addressed, not to the intellect, but to the heart, and always expresses feeling or passion.

What is most remarkable is that the feelings that Mozart depicts are often not his, but those of people he observes. He does not feel such emotions; he sees them. One could hardly believe this, but he says so himself in one of his letters;

> "I wished to compose an *andante* in accordance with Mlle Rose's character. And it is quite true to say that as Mlle Cannabich is, so is the *andante*" (December 6, 1777).

Mozart's dramatic spirit is so strong that it appears even in works least suited to its expression —in works into which the musician has put most of himself and his dreams.

. . . . . .

Let us put away the letters, and float down the stream of Mozart's music. Here we shall find his soul, and with it his characteristic gentleness and understanding.

These two qualities seem to pervade his whole nature; and they surround him and envelop him like a soft radiance. That is why he never succeeded in drawing, or attempted to draw, characters antipathetic to his own. We need only think of the

[1] Except, alas, when he was obliged to write a sonata, or an adagio for a musical clock, in order to earn a few florins.

tyrant in *Leonore*, of the satanic characters in *Freischütz* and *Euryanthe*, and of the monstrous heroes in the *Ring*, to know that through Beethoven, Weber, and Wagner, music is capable of expressing and inspiring hate and scorn. But if, as the Duke says in *Twelfth Night*, " music is the food of love," love is also its food. And Mozart's music is truly the food of love, and that is why he has so many friends. And how well he returns their love ! How tenderness and affection flow from his heart ! As a child he had an almost morbid need of affection. It is recorded that one day he suddenly said to an Austrian princess, " Madame, do you love me ? " And the princess, to tease him, said No. The child's heart was wounded and he began to sob.

His heart remained that of a child ; and beneath all his music we seem to hear a simple demand : " I love you ; please love me."[1]

His compositions constantly sing of love. Warmed by his own feeling, the conventional characters of lyric tragedy, in spite of insipid words and the sameness of love episodes, acquire a personal note, and possess a lasting charm for all those who are themselves capable of love. There is nothing

[1] It was almost impossible for him to compose except in the presence of someone he loved.

" You cannot believe how slowly time has gone without you. I can't quite explain what I mean. But I feel an emptiness about me, a kind of longing which is never satisfied, which is always there, and which increases every day and makes me feel quite ill. My work no longer attracts me, because I have been used to get up and have a few words with you when I wanted. Alas ! that comfort has gone. If I go to the piano to sing something, I have to stop because it affects me too much " (Letter to his wife, July 7, 1791).

extravagant or romantic about Mozart's love; he merely expresses the sweetness or the sadness of affection. As Mozart himself did not suffer from passion, so his heroes are not troubled with broken hearts. The sadness of Anna, or even the jealousy of Elecktra in *Idomeneo*, bears no resemblance to the spirit let loose by Beethoven and Wagner. The only passions that Mozart knew well were anger and pride. The greatest of all passions—"the entire Venus"—never appeared in him. It is this lack which gives his whole work a character of ineffable peace. Living as we do in a time when artists tend only to show us love by fleshly excesses, or by hypocritical and hysterical "mysticism," Mozart's music charms us quite as much by its ignorance as by its knowledge.

There is, however, some sensuality in Mozart. Though less passionate than Gluck or Beethoven, he is more voluptuous. He is not a German idealist; he is from Salzburg, which is on the road from Venice to Vienna; and there would seem to be something Italian in his nature. His art at times recalls the languid expression of Perugini's beautiful archangels and celestial hermaphrodites, whose mouths are made for everything except prayer. Mozart's canvas is larger than Perugini's, and he finds stirring expressions for the world of religion in quite another way. It is perhaps only in Umbria that we may find comparisons for his both pure and sensual music. Think of those delightful dreamers about love—of Tamino with his freshness of heart and youthful love; of Zerlina; of Constance; of the

countess and her gentle melancholy in *Figaro*; of Suzanne's sleepy voluptuousness; of the *Quintetto* with its tears and laughter; of the *Terzetto* (*Soave sia il vento*) in *Cosi fan tutte*, which is like "the sweet south, that breathes upon a bank of violets, stealing, and giving odour."[1] How much grace and *morbidezza* we have there.

But Mozart's heart is always—or nearly always—artless in its love; his poetry transfigures all it touches; and in the music of *Figaro* it would be difficult to recognize the showy, but cold and corrupt characters of the French opera. Rossini's shallow liveliness is nearer Beaumarchais in sentiment. The creation of Cherubin was almost something quite new in its expression of the disquiet and enchantment of a heart under the mysterious influence of love. Mozart's healthy innocence skated over doubtful situations (such as that of Cherubin with the countess), and saw nothing in them but a subject for merry talk. In reality there is a wide gap between Mozart's Figaros and Don Juans, and those of our French authors. With Molière the French mind had something bitter about it, when it was not affected, hard, or foolish; and Beaumarchais is cold and bright. Mozart's spirit was quite different, and left no aftertaste of bitterness; he was without malice, filled with love, and life, and activity, and ready for mischief and enjoyment of the world. His characters are delightful creatures, who amid laughter and thoughtless jests strive to hide the amorous emotion of their

[1] *Twelfth Night*, Act I, scene 1.

hearts. They make one think of the playful letters Mozart wrote his wife :

" Dear little wife, if I were to tell you all that I do with your dear picture you would laugh a good deal ! For instance, when I take it from its cover I say, ' God bless you, little Constance ! . . . God bless you, you little rogue ! . . . you ruffle-head with the pointed nose ! ' Then when I put it back again I slide it in slowly, coaxing it all the time. I finish by saying very quickly, ' Good night, little mouse, sleep well.' I am afraid I am writing silly things—at least the world would think so. But this is the sixth day I have been parted from you, and it seems as if a year had gone. . . . Well, if other people could look into my heart I should almost blush . . ." (April 13 and September 30, 1790).

. . . . . .

A great deal of gaiety leads to foolery ; and Mozart had a share of both. The double influence of Italian *opera buffa* and Viennese taste encouraged it in him. It is his least interesting side, and one would willingly pass it by, if it were not part of him. It is only natural that the body should have its needs as well as the spirit ; and when Mozart was overflowing with merriment some pranks were sure to be the result. He amused himself like a child ; and one feels that characters like Leporello, Osmin, and Papageno, gave him huge diversion.

Occasionally his buffoonery was almost sublime. Think of the character of Don Juan, and, indeed, of

the rest of the opera in the hands of this writer of *opera buffa*.[1] Farce here is mixed with the tragic action; it plays round the commander's statue and Elvira's grief. The serenade scene is a farcical situation; but Mozart's spirit has turned it into a scene of excellent comedy. The whole character of Don Juan is drawn with extraordinary versatility. In truth, it is an exceptional composition, both in Mozart's own work and perhaps even in the musical art of the eighteenth century.[2]

We must go to Wagner to find in musical drama characters that have so true a life, and that are as complete and reasonable from one end of the opera to the other. If there is anything surprising in this, it is that Mozart was able to depict so surely the character of a sceptical and aristocratic libertine. But if one studies Don Juan a little closer,[3] one sees in his brilliance, his selfishness, his teasing spirit, his pride, his sensuality, and his anger, the very traits that may be found in Mozart himself, in the obscure depths of his soul, where his genius felt

[1] These titles with Mozart corresponded to real distinctions. "Do you think," he said, "that I should write a comic opera in the same way as an *opera seria*? As an *opera seria* requires learning and very little humour, so an *opera buffa* needs plenty of gaiety and jesting and very little learning. If people want light music in an *opera seria*, I should be no use" (June 16, 1781).

[2] I say "perhaps," for we must not forget the *vis comica* (the power of making people laugh) of the Italian musicians in the eighteenth century, and must reserve our judgment on the great quantity of works which lie dormant in Italian libraries, and which all the great German classic musicians—such as Händel, Gluck, Mozart, and others—profited by.

[3] Don Juan is here an eighteenth-century Italian, and not the haughty Spaniard of the story, or the dry, atheistical little marquis of Louis XIV's court.

the possibilities of the good and bad influences of the whole world.

But what a strange thing! Each of the words we have used to characterize Don Juan have already been used in connection with Mozart's own personality and gifts. We have spoken of the sensuality of his music and his jesting spirit; and we have remarked his pride and his fits of anger, as well as his terrible—and legitimate—egoism.

Thus (strange paradox) Mozart's inner self was a potential Don Juan; and in his art he was able to realize in its entirety, by a different combination of the same elements, the kind of character that was farthest from his own. Even his winning affection is expressed by the fascination of Don Juan's character. And yet, in spite of appearances, this affectionate nature would probably have failed to depict the transports of a Romeo. And so a Don Juan was Mozart's most powerful creation, and is an example of the paradoxical qualities of genius.

. . . . . .

Mozart is the chosen friend of those who have loved and whose souls are quiet. Those who suffer can seek refuge elsewhere—in that great consoler, the man who suffered so himself and was beyond consolation—I mean Beethoven.

Not that Mozart's lot was an easy one; for fortune treated him even more roughly than she treated Beethoven. Mozart knew sadness in every form; he knew the pangs of mental suffering, the dread of the unknown, and the sadness of a lonely

soul. He has told us about some of it in a way that has not been surpassed by either Beethoven or Weber. Among other things, think of his Fantasias and the *Adagio in B minor* for the piano. In these works a new power appears, which I will call genius—if it does not seem an impertinence to imply that there is not genius in his other works. But I use "genius" in the sense of something outside a man's being, something which gives wings to a soul that in other ways may be quite ordinary —some outside power which takes up its dwelling in the soul, and is the God in us, the spirit higher than ourselves.

As yet, we have only considered a Mozart who was marvellously endowed with life and joy and love; and it was always himself that we found in the characters he created. Here we are on the threshold of a more mysterious world. It is the very essence of the soul that speaks here, a being impersonal and universal—the Being, the common origin of souls, which only genius may express.

Sometimes Mozart's individual self and his inner god engage in sublime discourse, especially at times when his dejected spirit seeks a refuge from the world. This duality of spirit may be often seen in Beethoven's works; though Beethoven's soul was violent, capricious, passionate, and strange. Mozart's soul, on the other hand, is youthful and gentle, suffering at times from an excess of affection, yet full of peace; and he sings his troubles in rhythmical phrases, in his own charming way, and ends by falling asleep in the midst of his tears with a smile

on his face. And it is the contrast between his flower-like soul and his supreme genius that forms the charm of his poems in music. One of the fantasias is like a tree with a large trunk, throwing out great branches covered with finely indented leaves and delicately scented flowers. The *Concerto in D minor* for pianoforte has a breath of heroism about it, and we seem to have lightning flashes alternating with smiles. The famous *Fantasia and sonata in C minor* has the majesty of an Olympian god and the delicate sensitiveness of one of Racine's heroines. In the *Adagio in B minor* the god has a graver aspect, and is ready to let loose his thunder; there the spirit sighs and does not leave the earth, its thoughts are on human affections, and in the end its plaint grows languorous and it falls asleep.

. . . . . .

There are times when Mozart's soul soars higher still and, casting aside his heroic dualism, attains sublime and quiet regions where the stirrings of human passion are unknown. At such times Mozart is equal to the greatest, and even Beethoven himself, in the visions of his old age, did not reach serener heights than these, where Mozart is transfigured by his faith.

The unfortunate part is that these occasions are rare; and Mozart's faith seems only to find such expression when he wishes to reassure himself. A man like Beethoven had often to reconstruct his faith, and spoke of it constantly. Mozart was a believer from the first; his faith is firm and calm,

and knows no disquietudes, so he does not talk about it ; rather does he speak of the gracious and ephemeral world about him, which he loves so well and which he wishes to love him. But when a dramatic subject opens a way to the expression of religious feeling, or when grave cares and suffering, or presentiments of death, destroy the joy of life and turn his thoughts to God, then Mozart is himself no longer (I am speaking of the Mozart the world knows and loves). He then appears what he might have become if death had not stopped him by the way—an artist fitted to realize Goethe's dream of the union of Christian feeling with pagan beauty, an artist who might have achieved " the reconciliation of the modern world with the ancient world "—which was what Beethoven tried to accomplish in his *Tenth Symphony* and what Goethe tried to do in his second *Faust*.[1]

In three works, particularly, has Mozart expressed

[1] Beethoven's Notebooks.

Goethe had a very clear notion of Mozart's mission in this direction.

On December 29, 1797, Schiller wrote to Goethe : " I had always hoped that tragedy would be evolved from opera in a finer and nobler form, as formerly it was evolved from the choruses and fêtes of Bacchus. In reality, opera may avoid all servile imitation of nature ; and by the power of music, by the excitation of the sensibilities that free the emotions from their coarser attributes, opera inclines the mind to the noblest feelings. Even passion itself may be shown with freedom, because music accompanies it ; and the wonderful, which is tolerated there, should make the spirit still less concerned with the subject."

Goethe replied : " If you could have been present at the last performance of *Don Giovanni*, you would have seen all your desires about opera realized. But that piece is unique, and Mozart's death has destroyed all hope of our ever seeing anything else like it " (December 30, 1797).

the Divine ; that is in the *Requiem*, in *Don Giovanni*, and in *Die Zauberflöte*. The *Requiem* breathes of Christian faith in all its purity. Mozart there put worldly pleasure away from him, and only kept his heart, which came fearfully and in humble repentance to speak with God. Sorrowful fear and gentle contrition united with a noble faith run through all that work. The touching sadness and personal accent of certain phrases suggest that Mozart was thinking of himself when he asked eternal repose for others.

In the two other works religious feeling also finds an outlet ; and through the artist's intuition it breaks away from the confines of an individual faith to show us the essence of all faith. The two works complete each other. *Don Giovanni* gives us the burden of predestination, which Don Juan has to carry as the slave of his vices and the worshipper of outside show. *Die Zauberflöte* sings of the joyous freedom of the Virtuous. Both by their simple strength and calm beauty have a classic character. The fatality in *Don Giovanni* and the serenity of *Die Zauberflöte* form perhaps the nearest approach of modern art to Greek art, not excepting Gluck's tragedies. The perfect purity of certain harmonies in *Die Zauberflöte* soar to heights which are hardly even reached by the mystic zeal of the knights of the Grail. In such work everything is clear and full of light.

. . . . . .

In the glow of this light Mozart died on December 5, 1791. The first performance of *Die Zauberflöte*

had taken place on September 30 in the same year, and Mozart wrote the *Requiem* during the two last months of his life. Thus he had scarcely begun to unfold the secret of his being when death took him —at thirty-five years of age. We will not think about that death. Mozart called it "his best friend"; and it was at death's approach and under its inspiration that he first became conscious of the supreme power that had been captive within him—a power to which he yielded himself in his last and highest work. It is only just to remember that at thirty-five Beethoven had not yet written either the *Appassionata* or the *Symphony in C minor*, and he was a long way from the conception of the *Ninth Symphony* and the *Mass in D*.

Death cut short the course of Mozart's life, but such life as he was spared has been to others a never-failing source of peace. In the midst of the turmoil of passion, which since the Revolution had entered all art and brought disquiet into music, it is comforting to seek refuge in this serenity, as one might seek it upon the heights of Olympus. From this quiet spot we may look down into the plain below, and watch the combats of heroes and gods from other lands, and hear the noise of the great world about them like the murmur of ocean billows on a distant shore.

Suave, mari magno . . .

MUSICAL SUPPLEMENT

THE DESPAIR OF ORPHEUS

(From Luigi Rossi's "Orfeo"[1])

[1] Act III, scene 10.

.te.
Ritornello.
ORFEO.
Quel ben ch'a me si to-glie riman là

giù, nè ponno angoscie e dogliestargià mai seco u
5 6
-ni - te; più pe - no - so ri-cet - to,
più dispera - to lo-co del mio mi - se-ro
pet - to non ha l'eter-no fo - co. Son
6
le mi-se-rie mi - e solo in-fi-ni - te,

Lascia - teAverno, o pe - ne, e
me e me se-gui te.
Ritornello come sopra.
E voi, del Tracio suol piaggie ri
8
-den-ti, ch' impa-rando a gioir dal-la mi-a
ce-tra garreg-giaste con l'etra, or,

all' as-pet-to sol de miei tor-
-men-ti d'horror vi ri-co-pri-te,
e tu, ce-tra in-fe-li-ce, obblia
gli accenti tuoi già si ca-no-ri, e per
o-gni pen-di-ce vien pur me-co pian-

-gen - do i miei do - lo - ri; son le
gio - ie per noi tut - te smar - ri - te.
Lascia - teAver no, o pe - ne, e
me e me se - gui - te.
Ritornello come sopra
ORFEO.
Ma che tar-do a mo - ri - re? Ma che

tardo a mo_ri _ re se può con lie_ta sor_te
ricon_dur_mi la mor_te al_la bella ca_
_gion del mio lan_gui _ re, a mo_
_ri _ re, a mo_ri _ re, a mo_
_ri _ re, a mo _ ri _ re.
34
43

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